World Soccer®

ONE WORLD, ONE GAME

JANUARY 2009 £3.60
www.worldsoccer.com

ALEX FERGUSON
Manager of the year

SCOLARI
"My Brazilian way"

ADRIANO
Back in business

2008 AWARDS SPECIAL ISSUE

WHO GOT YOUR VOTE?

World Player of the year

PLUS The highs, the lows, the stars, the scandals...

REVIEW OF 2008

EXPORT Printed in the UK
Australia $9.95 USA $7.50

BBC African Footballer of the Year

The Choice is Yours!

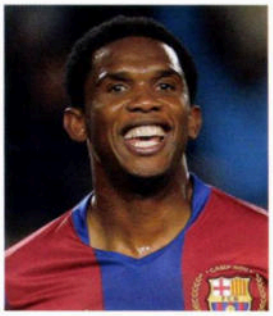
Who IS the best of the best in Africa?

You, the fans, decide the **BBC African Footballer of the Year**. Last year's winner was **Emmanuel Adebayor,** who will triumph in 2008? Judges from across Africa have drawn up the BBC's shortlist. Now it's up to you!

Mohamed **Aboutrika**
Text **Vote 1**

Emmanuel **Adebayor**
Text **Vote 2**

Didier **Drogba**
Text **Vote 3**



Samuel **Eto'o**
Text **Vote 4**

Amr **Zaki**
Text **Vote 5**

VOTE NOW

By text

+44 77 86 20 20 25

Online

bbcworldservice.com/afoy

Voting closes on 9 January 2009

For all the latest news and analysis on African football visit

bbcworldservice.com/africanfootball

BBC WORLD SERVICE

The text vote opens at 1700 gmt on December 1st and closes at 1700gmt on January 9th. Charges will differ from country to country so please check costs with your network provider. If you text after the vote has closed your vote may not count but you could still be charged.

For full terms and conditions please visit bbcworldservice.com/afoy

January 2009

CONGRATULATIONS to Cristiano Ronaldo, World Soccer's World player of the year for 2008. His elevation to the position of the world game's outstanding individual was hardly a surprise, but he deserves our applause nonetheless.

In the year of a World Cup or European Championship, it is usually that competition's best player who cleans up with the end-of-year awards. Ironically, Cristiano Ronaldo was a relative flop at Euro 2008. But there can no doubting his talent, nor the entertainment that he has provided over the past 12 months.

There was no one individual who can claim to have been the decisive figure in Spain's Euro 2008 triumph – hence the margin of Ronaldo's victory in the Player award. But the presence of five Spain players in our top 10 players of the year is proof that the European champions are worthy winners of the Team award.

This month we also report on a major scandal that has broken in Spain (page 18). It concerns match-fixing allegations on the final day of last season. More developments are expected by the time you read this, but it is a major issue to which we will be devoting more time over the coming months.

Indeed, next month, in a special feature, our columnists and correspondents will be trying to predict what the future holds for football. In the meantime, happy Christmas and best wishes for 2009.

GAVIN HAMILTON, Editor
gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Tokyo-based Mike Plastow has been working in the Japanese media for 25 years, covering Japanese football since the days of the old Japan Soccer League.

CONTENTS

COVER STORY

2008 AWARDS
36 The winners of the World Soccer Player, Manager, Team and Young player of the year awards

2008 REVIEW
40 The last 12 months in words and pictures

THE WORLD THIS MONTH
4 **12 stories** you need to know about
7 **7 questions** we need answers to
8 **10 people** on the move
10 **Brian Glanville** on why people should not get too carried away with Fabio Capello following England's win in Berlin
12 **Paul Gardner** on 'Delapomania'

HEADLINERS
14 **People in the news** Steve Savidan, Diego Simeone, Juan Mata, Keith Harris, Marc Janko

DISPATCHES
18 **The big stories from our correspondents** Spain – Newspaper revelations about the final day of last season threaten to unleash a major match-fixing scandal; Argentina – Diego Maradona's first month as national coach; United States – the MLS Cup Final; Italy – Antonio Cassano's racy new autobiography; England – Premier League clubs in financial difficulties; Russia – outsiders Rubin Kazan celebrate their first league title; Japan – Gamba Osaka's Asian Champions League success demonstrates the strength of the Japanese club game.

CLUB WORLD CUP
34 The contenders

FACE TO FACE
54 Chelsea manager **Luiz Felipe Scolari**

SIX OF THE BEST
60 **Adrianos**

SQUADS
62 **Italy**

TALENT SCOUT
64 **Tomorrow's stars today** Gervinho, Batuhan, Alan Dzagoev

MEMORIES
66 **1950 World Cup** Blame it on Rio – Brian Glanville remembers the extraordinary tournament in Brazil that was decided by a thriller that wasn't a real Final.

SOCCER CITIES
74 **Cairo** Stadiums, history, what to see

WORLD SERVICE
83 **Global news and results digest** Europe, the Americas, Asia, Oceania, Africa, non-FIFA, results

FAMOUS LAST WORDS
114 **Who said what and why**

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

SAVE MONEY ON WorldSoccer
SEE OUR SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTIONS OFFER ON PAGE 58

12 stories you need to know about

World's best...Ronaldo

Asian victory...Gamba Osaka

1 Cristiano Ronaldo acclaimed as world's best player

The Manchester United winger swept the board in the end-of-year awards, being voted *World Soccer*'s World player of the year. More page, 36.

2 Al Ahly triumph

The Egyptian side confirmed their reputation as Africa's leading club side with victory over Coton Sport of Cameroon in the Final of the African Champions League to qualify for the Club World Cup in Japan. More, page 99.

African triumph...Al Ahly celebrate

3 Gamba Osaka shine in Asian Champions League Final

The J.League side demonstrated the strength of Japanese club football when they beat Adelaide United to win the Asian Champions League. More, page 98.

4 Scandal in Spain

A major scandal is brewing after newspaper revelations about the game between Malaga and Tenerife on the final day of last season, when Malaga won promotion to the top flight in controversial circumstances. More, page 18.

Allegation...Malaga-Tenerife

And the winner is...Confederations Cup draw in Johannesburg

7 Uruguay championship suspended

Football-related violence in South America remains a huge problem with Uruguay the latest country to be hit. The championship was suspended indefinitely after around 200 fans fought a vicious battle on the pitch following the top-of-the-table match between Danubio and Nacional. More, page 96.

Inter victory...Materazzi celebrates

Cup-winners

6 Columbus Crew win MLS Cup

For once, the finale of the Major League Soccer year lived up to its billing as Columbus Crew, the best team in the regular season, beat surprise finalists New York Red Bulls. More, page 24.

8 Inter beat Juventus in Derby d'Italia

Defending champions Internazionale took a decisive step towards retaining their Serie A title when they beat Juventus 1-0 in Milan. More, page 26.

5 All eyes on Johannesburg

The draw for next summer's Confederations Cup turned the spotlight firmly on South Africa's preparations for the 2010 World Cup. The clock is ticking... More, page 50.

Pitch battle...Danubio and Nacional fans clash in Uruguay

Caught short...last season's closing champions River Plate are bottom of the table in Argentina

9 River Plate bottom in Argentina

The woes of last season's closing champions continue as the Buenos Aires side could not pull out of their slump, despite the sacking of coach Diego Simeone. More, pages 15 and 95.

10 Maradona's first major row

The first of many likely arguments, over Diego Maradona's choice of assistant, threatened to overshadow his first game in charge of Argentina, against Scotland. More, page 22.

Flying high...Portuguese league leader Leixoes

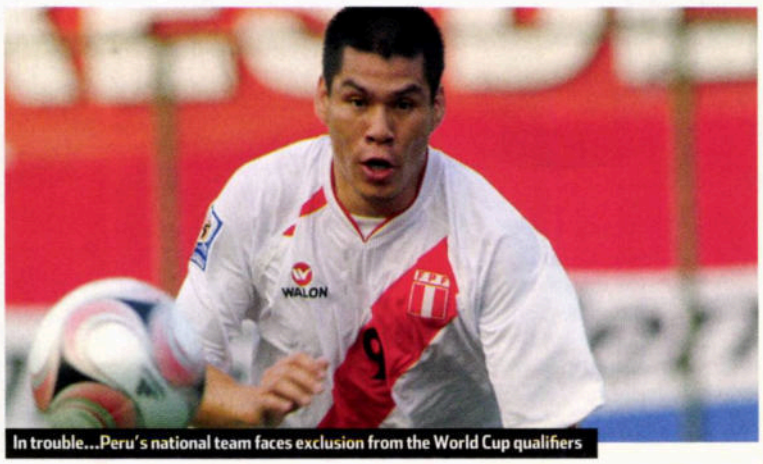
11 Leixoes riding high in Portugal

Leixoes were the surprise leaders in Portugal. The team from Matosinhos, near Porto, gained promotion to the Portuguese top flight in 2007 after 18 seasons away. More, page 86.

12 Peru suspended by FIFA

The Peruvian national side faces the prospect of being kicked out of World Cup qualifying while the country's club could miss out on next year's Libertadores Cup after the federation was suspended following a row with FIFA. More, page 96.

Oscar nomination row...Maradona wants Ruggeri as his assistant



In trouble...Peru's national team faces exclusion from the World Cup qualifiers

7 questions we need answers to

Inter mission?...Didier Drogba

1 WHERE IS ANDREI ARSHAVIN HEADING?

The Russia midfielder was keen to move from Zenit St Petersburg in the January transfer window. More, page 30

2 WAS DIDIER DROGBA TAPPED UP BY INTERNAZIONALE?

The Chelsea striker and his agent were spotted in a London restaurant with Inter's sporting director Marco Branca and Jose Mourinho's agent Jorge Mendes. Just a coincidence, you understand.

3 WHY DID THE FA NOT PUNISH CHRIS MORGAN?

Barnsley's Iain Hume may never play again after the vicious elbow aimed at him by Morgan, but the Sheffield United defender escaped with just a yellow card and no further action from the FA.

Euro loan...Beckham

Leaving Zenit?...Arshavin

4 ARE MLS'S BEST PLAYERS TAKING THE LEAGUE FOR A RIDE?

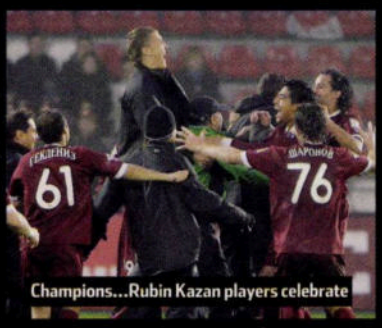
Landon Donovan and Cuauhtemoc Blanco are the latest big names to leave their MLS clubs for the American close season, following David Beckham's move to Milan. More, page 8.

Unpunished attack...Morgan

5 WHY DOES REAL MADRID COACH BERND SCHUSTER NOT RATE JAVIER SAVIOLA?

Overlooked in Madrid...Saviola

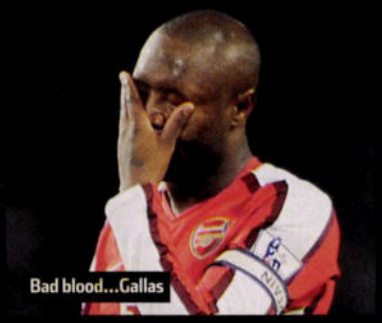
Real Madrid turned to the January transfer window, signing Klaas-Jan Huntelaar from Ajax, rather than promote Argentinian Javier Saviola, a prolific scorer when out on loan, as a replacement for the injured Ruud Van Nistelrooy.



Champions...Rubin Kazan players celebrate

6 RUBIN WHO?

Rubin Kazan won their first Russian league title in convincing style. More, page 30.


Bad blood...Gallas

7 WHO'S ADVISING WILLIAM GALLAS?

The Frenchman was stripped of the Arsenal captaincy after inflammatory comments about his team-mates that were designed to promote his autobiography. But did his agent not anticipate the fallout?

JANUARY 2009 Vol 49 No 4

EDITOR
Gavin Hamilton
ART EDITOR
Gary Payne
PICTURE EDITOR
Duncan Bond
NEWS EDITOR
Jamie Rainbow
EDITORIAL SECRETARY
June Hiscock
PICTURES
Pictures copyright: Empics, Getty Images, Action Images and Reuters

Thanks this issue to
Mike Hughes, Debbie Millett, Peter Neish, David Rallis

EDITORIAL
Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU
Tel: +44 (0) 20 314 84817
Fax: +44 (0) 20 314 88130
E-mail: world_soccer@ipcmedia.com

ADVERTISING AND SPONSORSHIP
Dave Stone, Simon Gerard, Simon Ellis
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Tom Jennings
PRODUCTION CONTROLLER
Yee Lei Sheng

MANAGING DIRECTOR Paul Williams
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Hamish Dawson
PUBLISHER Adrian Booker

Display ads +44 (0) 20 314 82510
Classified ads +44 (0) 20 314 82576
Sponsorship +44 (0) 20 314 82516
Back issues +44 (0) 20 314 84816
Binders +44 (0) 20 314 84816

International licensing enquiries
+44 (0) 20 314 85490
E-mail: Siriliya_Nawalkar@ipcmedia.com

IPC|INSPIRE

SUBSCRIPTIONS ORDER HOTLINE
+44 (0)845 676 7778
E-mail: ipcsubs@qss-uk.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES
Annual subscription is for 12 months (13 issues, prices include postage) UK: £44.20
Europe/Eire (inc. VAT): 88.43euros (airmail)
USA: $121.18 (airmail)
Rest of world: £76.42 (airmail)

Periodicals paid at Rahway, NJ Postmaster: send address changes to *World Soccer*, c/o MAIL America, 365 Blair Road, Avenel NJ 0700I, USA. USPS004075

SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPARTMENT
Rockwood House, 9-17 Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 3DH, England
Tel: +44 (0) 1444 475 675

WorldSoccer is a member of ESM EUROPEAN SPORTS MAGAZINES

- A Bola (Portugal)
- Don Balon (Spain)
- Fanatik (Turkey)
- Kicker (Germany)
- La Gazzetta dello Sport (Italy)
- Sport-Express (Russia)
- Sport/Foot (Belgium)
- TIPS Bladet (Denmark)
- Voetbal International (Holland)
- World Soccer (UK)

10 people on the move

Who's gone where

1 KLAAS HUNTELAAR
Spanish champions Real Madrid have agreed a deal with Ajax Amsterdam to sign the Dutch international striker as a replacement for Ruud Van Nistelrooy, who has been ruled out for the rest of the season with a serious knee injury. Madrid will pay an initial £16.6million for 25-year-old Huntelaar and a further £5.8million depending on appearances.

Madrid man...Huntelaar

2 CUAUHTEMOC BLANCO
The Chicago Fire midfielder will spend the Major League Soccer close season on loan to Mexico's Santos Laguna.

3 LANDON DONOVAN
The LA Galaxy forward will spend the next three months on loan at Bayern Munich, returning to the USA for the new season in March.

Mexico loan...Blanco

4 GIORGOS DONIS
The former Blackburn Rovers winger was sacked by AEK Athens after just six months as coach.

5 SINISA MIHAJLOVIC
The former Lazio and Sampdoria defender was appointed as new coach of Bologna following the sacking of Daniele Arrigoni.

Back at Saint-Etienne...Comolli

Bayern bound...Donovan

6 DAMIEN COMOLLI
The former Spurs sporting director was not out of work for long, returning to his former club St Etienne to work alongside new coach Alain Perrin.

7 TINTIN MARQUEZ
The Spaniard was sacked as coach of Espanyol after the 1-0 home defeat by Sporting Gijon that saw them slip to 17th in Spain's Primera Division.

New man in Bologna...Mihajlovic

8 VOLKER FINKE
The German, who made his name as coach of Freiburg, was poised to become the new coach of Japan's Urawa Reds.

Sacked...Emerson Leao

New contract...Rivaldo

9 EMERSON LEAO
The former Brazil manager has been replaced at Qatari side Al Sadd by Dzemaludin Musovic, who was in charge of the Qatar national team at the 2007 Asian Cup.

10 RIVALDO
The Brazilian World Cup-winner dismissed speculation he was leaving Bunyodkor following their exit from the Asian Champions League by signing a new three-year contract with the Tashkent-based club.

R.I.P.

REGIS GENAUX, the former Belgium defender, has died from heart failure, aged 35. Genaux, who played abroad for Coventry and Udinese, won 22 caps for his country.

FARAH ADDO, the former Somalian referee and vice-president of the Confederation of African Football, has died aged 73. Addo made worldwide headlines in 2002 when he alleged that African delegates at the 1998 FIFA Congress had been offered bribes by supporters of Sepp Blatter.

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

REPORTS
WE COULDN'T MAKE UP

BOTAFOGO DEFENDER Andre Luis was sent off for grabbing the referee's yellow card when the Brazilian side were knocked out of the Copa Sudamericana by Argentina's Estudiantes in a bad-tempered quarter-final second leg in Rio de Janeiro.

Matters boiled over following a brawl in which Andre Luis, who earlier this year was frog-marched out of the stadium by police after being sent off in a Brazilian championship match against Nautico, was booked.

The enraged defender then snatched the yellow card from referee Carlos Chandia and was promptly sent off.

5 RUMOURS
WE'D LIKE TO BELIEVE

1 **GERMANY'S KICKER** suggest Schalke's Brazilian full-back Rafinha, who as at loggerheads with his club this summer for taking part in the Olympics without their permission, is negotiating a move to Bayern Munich. He is seen as a long-term replacement for Frenchman Willy Sagnol, who has expressed fears that an Achilles injury might force him to quit the game.

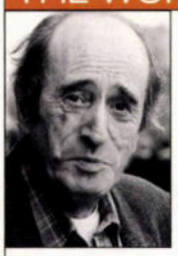
2 **IN AN INTERVIEW** with Spanish daily *AS*, Valencia president Vicente Soriano admitted his number one transfer target was Atletico Madrid's Argentinian attacker Sergio Aguero. Aguero is also said to be wanted by Manchester City but is the subject of a 60million euro (£50m) release clause.

On his way...Rafinha

3 **IL GIORNO** in Italy, claims Roma's Brazilian centre-back Juan is unhappy about his wage levels and has threatened to quit the club for one of the Milan sides. The former Leverkusen man is, however, under contract with Roma until 2011.

4 **MARCA INSIST** Milan will take William Gallas off Arsenal's hands in the wake of the French central defender losing the skipper's armband for revealing dressing room secrets at the Emirates Stadium.

5 **FORMER MILAN** and Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi is in talks about a coaching role with the UAE national side, according to *The National* newspaper in Abu Dhabi.



Brian Glanville

...on why people should not get too carried away with Capello's England...the poor timing of William Gallas... and what future for Danny Welbeck?

BEFORE we deify Fabio Capello and succumb to euphoria over the exploits of the England team in Berlin, let us all try to be objective.

Yes, it was a wonderfully heartening win, with a team whose whole was splendidly greater than its parts. It was attained, moreover, with consistently crisp, intelligent progressive football, against a German team, admittedly thoroughly mediocre, which never deserved to get back into the game with a goal as fortuitous and farcical as the one with which England themselves had taken the lead.

Given England's overall superiority, it would be wrong to say that Capello rode his luck, but he unquestionably, however deservedly, enjoyed it. Gambling on three players, he won his bet on two of them, and lost embarrassingly on the other.

Neither Stewart Downing nor Matthew Upson had, on previous England form, looked worthy of a place. Downing had been a deep disappointment on the left wing, anonymous where he hadn't been ineffectual, while Upson had two dreadful games against Kazakhstan and Belarus. Yet both in Berlin surpassed themselves, Upson even having the rare satisfaction of putting England ahead.

The gamble which failed? That of recalling the deeply-suspect Scott Carson, who was there only because of injury to Manchester City's Joe Hart. Why not West Ham's Robert Green, in splendid shot-stopping form the previous Saturday against Portsmouth? There was no real reason to bring Carson on at all, and the goal he and John Terry gave away proved the point.

Oops, we did it again... Terry and Carson look on in horror as Helmes accepts the gift to score for Germany in Berlin

Terry, with characteristic decency, tried to take responsibility for the confusion which enabled Patrick Helmes to tap the ball through Carson's legs and run it into the net. But one suspects it wouldn't have happened had David James stayed on.

The fact that both Frank Lampard and Steve Gerrard dropped out (how insulting that Gerrard was obliged to come all that way south to prove he was genuinely injured) in effect kept a Capello problem in abeyance. We know all too well that they tend to cancel each other out when both operate in central midfield. So well did the excellent Gareth Barry and Michael Carrick play that it was hard not to think that they should be there to stay.

The wretched training injury to Theo Walcott was a dreadful blow to the player and his club, Arsenal, but enabled Shaun Wright-Phillips to reassert himself, following his transformation back at Manchester City, as a winger of pace and quality.

All credit to Capello, too, for giving Gabriel Agbonlahor the chance to show his exhilarating use of dynamic pace to alarm defences.

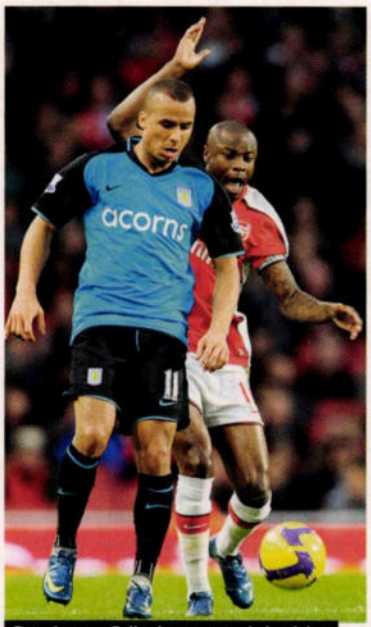
Yet just how bad were Germany? They had made hard work of scraping through 1-0 in their World Cup qualifier at home to modest Wales and things had been in turmoil since Torsten Frings protested publicly at having been excluded by the coach, Joachim Low. Michael Ballack came loudly to his defence and Low demanded Ballack come to Germany to explain himself. Ballack apologised.

Hardly the ideal conditions in which to essay an international and Low compounded his problems with his selection. Giving Marvin Compper, centre-back for the remarkable Hoffenheim team, a first cap at left-back made no sense. Jermaine Jones, another new cap in midfield, was a nullity. Mario Gomez failed up front.

All in all, the future does indeed look as bright for England, as it looks gloomy for Germany. But let us not be carried away.

> "Capello, gambling on three players, won his bet on two of them and lost embarrassingly on the other"

WILLIAM Gallas may well have had a point when he deplored what he saw as the turmoil in the ranks at Arsenal. Yet it was hardly the ideal time to speak of such things after he had been far too slow to catch Villa's Agbonlahor when he scored on the previous Saturday.


Out of sync...Gallas loses out to Agbonlahor

AS I write, it seems that Alex Ferguson may bring the lively and incisive Fraizer Campbell back from Spurs, where he has been on loan, to Old Trafford. Which makes you wonder what will happy to Danny Welbeck. Barely 18, he scored a splendid and spectacular goal when he appeared, recently as a late substitute against a palsied Stoke City. Afterwards he declared that he did not want to go out on loan, but what, if he stays at Old Trafford, are the hopes of this gifted young Mancunian finding regular games?

United already have a platoon of highly-gifted strikers, and should Campbell come back as well, what hope for Welbeck? Campbell spent last season to prolific advantage on loan to Hull City, who would surely never have come up to the Premier League without his goals. Not to mention the one he so adroitly made for Dean Windass' spectacular volley at Wembley, in the play-off win over Bristol City.

Future unclear...Welbeck

THAT afternoon at Old Trafford, it was predictable alas that even though he was celebrating his 50 years in football, Ferguson wouldn't come to the post-match press conference, although you could catch him at some length on the club's close circuit television. Not having been at Old Trafford for some time, I assumed that his second in command, Mike Phelan, would, as he does on BBC TV, stand in for him at the conference; only to be told this never happened, "Ah," I remarked, "where there's no sense, there's no Phelan." Forgive me.

IT was saddening to hear of the death of Alan Hoby, albeit at the splendid old age of 94. For years I travelled the world with Alan, a Royal Marine in the Second World War, and later for some years sports columnist of *The People*. Oddly enough, I don't think we ever saw the best of him, his fluency, his humour, in print. He had perhaps been too long involved with the formulaic popular sports journalism of his time.

He was acerbic, keenly intelligent, funny and sometimes combative. We were at odds from time to time but I shall always remember him with affection.

For Club and Country, *a collection of Brian Glanville's* Guardian *football obituaries, is out now (Guardian Books, £8.99)*

SEVEN GOALS
WE'D LIKE TO SEE AGAIN...

1 *Robinho, Man City v Twente*
A curling screamer from the corner of the area.

2 *Giuseppe Rossi, Villarreal v Almeria*
A fierce shot from 30 yards.

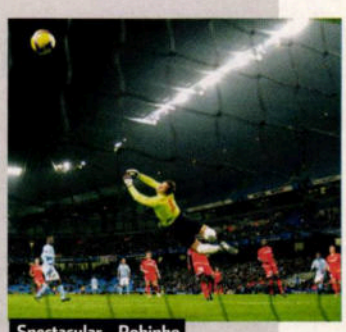
3 *Mladen Petric, Hamburg v Hertha Berlin*
A brilliant overhead effort.

4 *Rodriguez, PSV v Heracles*
Powerful shot after run from halfway line.

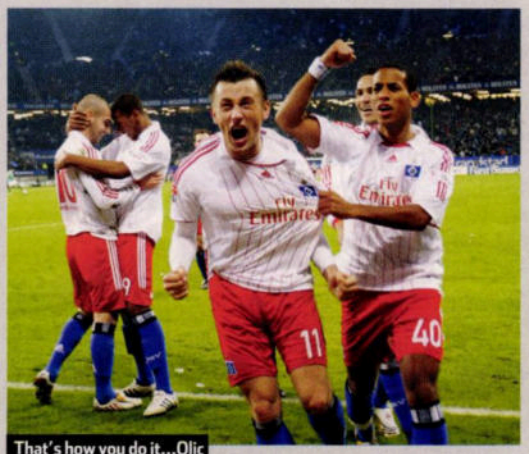
5 *Ari, AZ v Ajax*
Inspired backheel.

6 *Ivica Olic, Hamburg v Werder Bremen*
Blistering long-range curler.

7 *Maicon, Brazil v Portugal*
Fired in from tight angle after clever passing move.


Spectacular...Robinho

Cheeky...Ari


That's how you do it...Olic

To see clips of these goals, visit www.worldsoccer.com

Paul Gardner

Delapomania proves there's nothing new in football

A WORD or two about Mackay – no not Dave Mackay, the tough-guy Spurs and Scotland international of the 1960s, but rather another Scot, author Charles Mackay, and his wonderfully-titled book *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*.

The book, says Mackay, highlights those "moral epidemics which have been excited, sometimes by one cause and sometimes by another, and to show how easily the masses have been led astray".

Mackay deals with a variety of these epidemics, including the so-called Tulipomania of the 17th century, when tulip bulbs, pound-for-pound, were for a short period more valuable than gold.

Sadly, Mackay has no examples to offer from sports. But I do. I shall call it Delapomania.

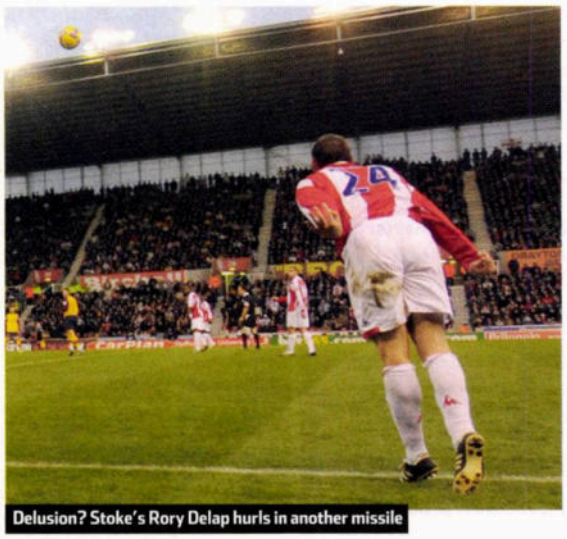
Suddenly Stoke City's Rory Delap comes along with his long throws, a slightly unusual technique in English football – and everyone professes awe, wonder and helplessness.

I watched on television a depressingly dull game between Stoke and Hull. The game was barely a couple of minutes old before the analyst told us it was "impossible" to defend against Delap's throws. I've seen Delap himself quoted as saying much the same.

Oh, come on! In the Stoke-Hull game I counted eight Delap throws (maybe more, my attention wandered a bit) but no goals. Only one good chance, actually, a header well saved by the Hull goalkeeper.

So these all-conquering throws created only one scoring chance in eight tries. That doesn't sound any better than the average corner-kick ratio, but when was the last time anyone said you couldn't defend against corners?

And when the Extraordinary Delusions start, when the Crowds (this time of coaches) lapse into Madness, then the pseudo-science that is always hovering over sport these days kicks in. The experts and the analysts have had a field day with this. I particularly like this contribution, from the Stoke manager Tony Pulis: "He [Delap] throws it pretty flat and it's very difficult for defenders to pick up the flight." Really? And this "difficulty" afflicts only the defenders and not the attackers?



Delusion? Stoke's Rory Delap hurls in another missile

What we have here is a wonderful example of the contagious madness that Mackay writes about, an Extraordinary Delusion that, were it reality, would have Stoke running away with the Premier League. More significantly, all those wonderful academies which consistently fail to produce the promised whizz-kids would be scouting for throwers and a new type of coach – the throw-in coach – would have made his appearance.

Eons ago we were regaled with stories about a new sensation, a long-throw specialist, a Scot would you believe, called Jimmy Husband. I went to see him play, and was greatly unimpressed by his laborious throws, which were long and high and unproductive. Too easy for defenders to pick up the flight, I imagine.

In the USA, we have seen quite a few of these long-throw guys, probably because Americans in general pay more attention to upper-body development. One of them, I recall from college soccer back in the early 1970s, was Steve Baumann (he now runs the National Soccer Hall of Fame) who had the longest, strongest throw I've seen. The ball came hurtling into the penalty area parallel to the ground. Dangerous? Yes. Undefendable? Please, get real.

And there is the flip-throw, where the player somersaults on the sideline and hurls the ball in like a missile as he crests upright. It is alive and well, also in the college game.

Delap hasn't got around to anything quite as outre as that yet, but the Stoke-Hull game did feature an array of towels cunningly positioned around the touchlines so that he could dry the ball (thereby, I suppose, obviating the dreaded slippage factor). And to underline the sheer asininity of the whole rigmarole, there was the opposing manager, Phil Brown, coming up with a master tactical ploy, telling one of his substitutes to cavort about near Delap, trying to disrupt the throw.

This is all nonsense, a true Extraordinary Popular Delusion, a veritable Madness of Crowds. One convincing piece of evidence – how come no one noticed this mighty weapon during the more than 10 years that Delap has spent playing at the top level in England before this season?

Consider a possible future scenario: every Premier League team with a long-throw specialist hurling thunderbolts into penalty areas while flummoxed defenders try to "pick up the flight".

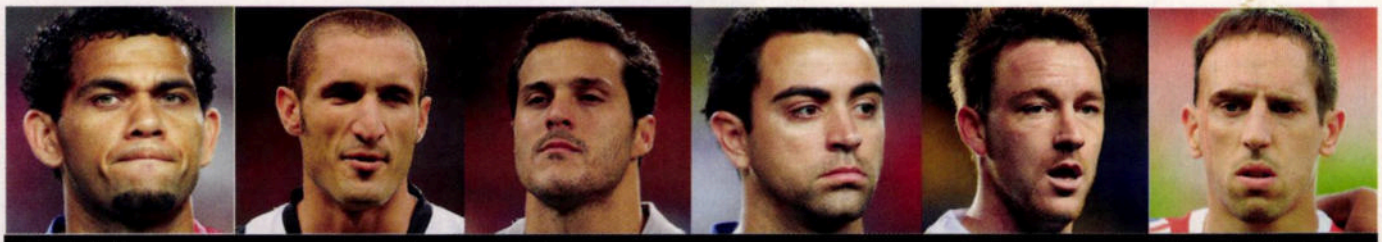
A much more likely future is that Delapomania will soon fade into oblivion. That's what happened to all of Mackay's examples of delusions. The phenomenon of crowd madness is nothing new. Mackay would no doubt be interested in Delapomania – but he'll never know, because there's nothing new about him, either. He wrote his book in 1841, and died in 1889.

"The ball comes hurtling into the penalty area parallel to the ground. Dangerous? Yes. Undefendable? Get real"

ESM Team of the Month

European Sports Magazines

NOVEMBER 2008



Daniel Alves
Barcelona
Votes ●●●●
The flying Brazilian full-back has given Barca's right flank a new attacking dimension since his summer move from Sevilla.

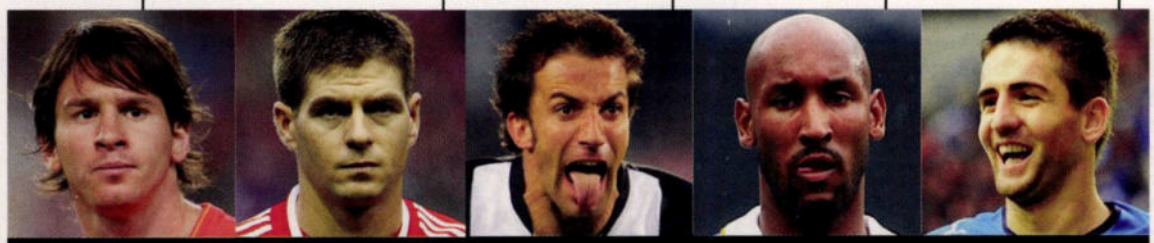
Giorgio Chiellini
Juventus
Votes ●●●●
The central defensive linchpin of the Juventus revival, helping his team back from Serie B to Champions League contenders.

Julio Cesar
Internazionale
Votes ●●●
A solid presence in the Inter defence as the Italian champions beat Juventus and also qualified for the Champions League knockout stages.

Xavi
Barcelona
Votes ●●●●
The versatile Spain playmaker ended a brilliant year with more sparkling performances for La Liga's form side.

John Terry
Chelsea
Votes ●●●●
Consistent in central defence for Chelsea, he made up for an earlier, costly mistake by scoring England's winner against Germany in Berlin.

Franck Ribery
Bayern Munich
Votes ●●●●●●●●●
The Frenchman's return to form and fitness, following his injury at Euro 2008, has coincided with Bayern's march up the Bundesliga table.



Lionel Messi
Barcelona
Votes ●●●●
The little Argentinian continued to produce big performances, particularly when putting Barca's opponents to the sword in the Champions League.

Steven Gerrard
Liverpool
Votes ●●●●●●
More inspiring performances from the Liverpool captain, who was on course to be top scorer in the group stages of the Champions League.

Alessandro Del Piero
Juventus
Votes ●●●●●●●
A brilliant Champions League double against Real Madrid proved rumours of his demise greatly exaggerated.

Nicolas Anelka
Chelsea
Votes ●●●●●●●
The much-travelled Frenchman took advantage of Didier Drogba's loss of form and fitness to prove his worth as a ruthless finisher.

Vedad Ibisevic
Hoffenheim
Votes ●●●●●●●●
The leading striker from surprise packet Hoffenheim is well on course to finish the first half of the Bundesliga season as top scorer.

HOW IT WORKS

Every month, journalists from each member of the European Sports Magazines group vote for their first XI from Europe's top leagues. The players with the most votes make the overall team. For details of how the members voted this month, visit worldsoccer.com/esm11

HEADLINERS

People in the news...on and off the pitch

Steve Savidan

From binman to hitman: the ultimate journeyman's tale

FRANCE

FRANCE'S TEPID 0-0 draw with Uruguay in a recent friendly made few headlines, but for one Frenchman at least it was a match to remember. Steve Savidan, a 30-year-old striker with hugely unfashionable Caen, enjoyed his first 45 minutes of international football as a half-time substitute for Nicolas Anelka.

But perhaps the 79,666 supporters inside the Stade de France enjoyed Savidan's debut even more. For SS is the ultimate fans' player, whose rags-to-riches story would have even fairytale writers dismissing it as too far-fetched.

Born in Angers on June 29, 1978, Savidan started with local club Angers SCO in 1998, then spent six years wandering the wastelands of France's lower leagues, changing clubs every season and singularly failing to set the world alight. He hit his nadir in 2002-03 when he failed to score a single goal in 24 games for Beauvais and was shipped out to semi-pro Angouleme in the French third division, where he was forced to supplement his income with stints as a binman and bartender.

Giving a whole new meaning to the word 'journeyman', Savidan's 12 goals in his one season at Angouleme saw him transferred again, this time to Valenciennes at the age of 26. And it was here that something clicked. Thanks to a sudden spurt of Savidan strikes Valenciennes were promoted in successive seasons and against all odds made it to Ligue 1.

A player who seemed destined for obscurity was suddenly in the top flight and Savidan marked his first game at that level with a goal against Auxerre on August 5, 2006. This proved to be no fluke and his two seasons in Ligue 1 have seen the ugly duckling turning into a beautiful swan. This summer, a £4million move to Caen was recognition of his remarkable rise.

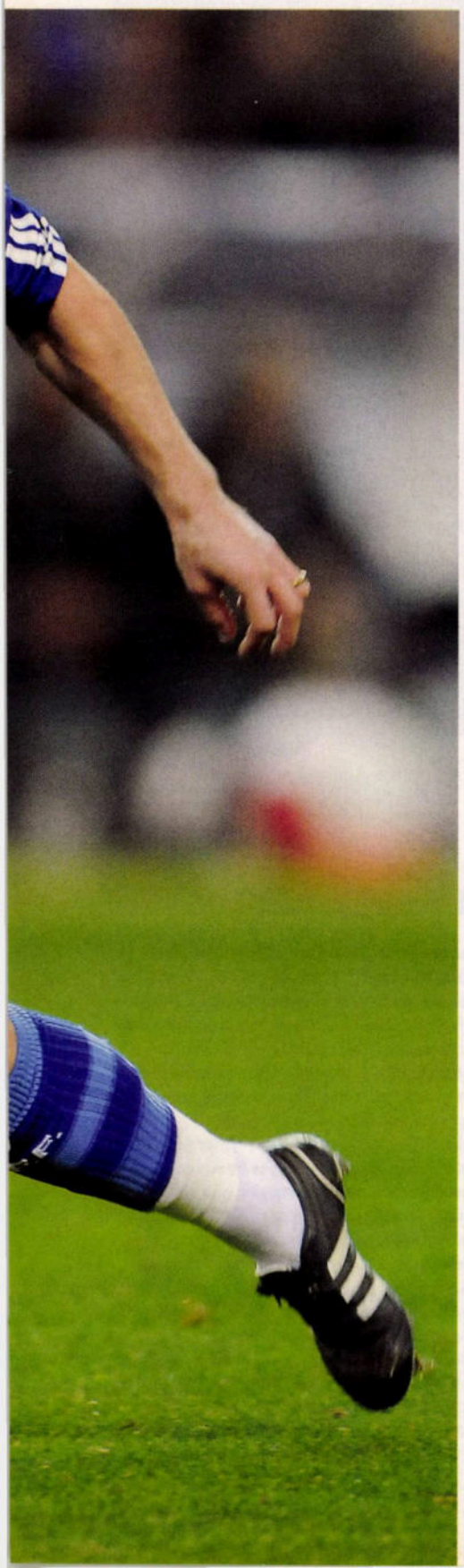
"I have real trouble believing I'm one of the top strikers in France," says the unassuming and amusing Savidan. "But the stats don't lie." So what was the problem in those early days? "Self-destructive tendencies," he says somewhat cryptically. "I was borderline suicidal – at least until I got help from two people, a psychiatrist in Angers and a GP at Valenciennes."

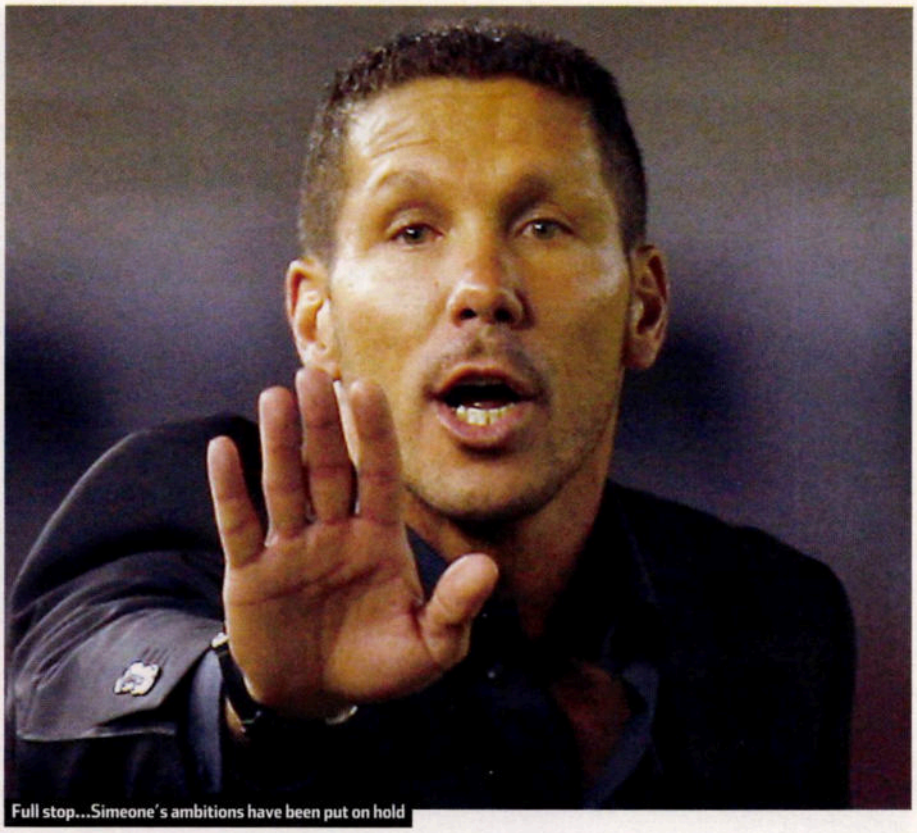
If all wasn't well in Savidan's head back then, things look much brighter now. His goalscoring streak has continued at Caen, with six goals so far this season, and his reward in winning his first French cap was warmly greeted by a footballing public who recognise in Savidan something of the everyman.

"It was great against Uruguay," Savidan said. "There was no pressure because the manager simply told me to go out there and 'do a Savidan'." Then with typical realism he posed the question, "Who knows if I can make it at international level? Only time – and my performances – will tell."

Howard Johnson

Called to the colours ...Savidan's route to *Les Blues* has been the stuff of fairytales





Full stop...Simeone's ambitions have been put on hold

Diego Simeone
River runs dry for rising coaching star

ARGENTINA

DIEGO SIMEONE, the man famously involved in the sending-off of David Beckham in the 1998 World Cup, has suffered the first setback of his managerial career after quitting River Plate following an extraordinary run of failure.

The former Argentina captain, often described as playing with a knife between his teeth, had enjoyed a long winning streak after he retired and turned to coaching early in 2006.

Habitually dressed in black and sporting a couple of days' growth on his chin, Simeone continues to cut a menacing figure as he prowls the touchline and probably has the opposition grateful that he's not on the pitch.

After a brief spell with Racing Club, Simeone moved to Estudiantes and helped them win the opening championship in 2006.

At the start of this year he joined River Plate and repeated the dose, winning the 2007-08 closing championship within six months and bringing River's their first title in eight tournaments. But it all went wrong in the 2007-08 opening championship.

Having lost key players such as goalkeeper Juan Pablo Carrizo to Lazio, forward Ariel Ortega (shipped off to a second division club because of drinking and discipline problems) and Chilean striker Alexis Sanchez to Udinese, River went to pieces.

They embarked on a club record 12 matches without a win in the league, culminating in a humiliating 1-0 home defeat by eternal rivals Boca Juniors, who played nearly the entire second half of the Buenos Aires *superclassico* with 10 men.

After a 1-1 home draw with Newell's Old Boys, Simeone became so enraged that he smashed his fist against the substitutes' bench and broke his hand.

It was a good excuse to miss the post-match press conference which usually involved Simeone saying: "We played quite well, we didn't take our chances. The situation's not normal but it's reality. We are where we are and we have to fight to get out. I'm the only one to blame for this. Thank you and good night."

The final straw came in the Copa Sudamericana semi-final when, needing a win away to Mexico's Guadalajara to progress, River blew a 2-0 lead and were held 2-2.

Having been mentioned as a possible successor to national team coach Alfio Basile – before Diego Maradona got the job – Simeone will probably have to take a step back and wait for a new chance at one of the middle-ranking clubs such as Independiente, San Lorenzo or Velez Sarsfield. His real dream, of course, is the chance to coach in Europe.

Brian Homewood

Small but tough...Mata (right) takes on Sevilla's muscular Ivory Coast midfielder Ndri Romaric in a league game at the Sanchez Pizjuan

Juan Mata
The one Real Madrid let slip away

SPAIN

RONALD KOEMAN is not exactly popular in Valencia, and no wonder. When coach Quique Sanchez Flores was sacked in week nine of the 2007-08 season, they were in fourth place, just four points off the top; when they finally got rid of Koeman, his replacement, they were 35 points off the top and just two clear of the relegation zone. They had suffered their worst away result in 25 years, their captain, David Albeda, had taken the club to court and players were queuing to leave.

But for one thing Valencia fans should be grateful. So, in fact, should football fans across Spain. It was Koeman who gave a chance to and really believed in Juan Mata. A skilful little attacker who has just won a well-deserved call-up to the Spain squad (although he did not play against Chile), Mata has been an ever-present for Valencia this season and boasts five goals. And the truth is that, without Koeman, it is unlikely that most fans would have even heard of *la seleccion's* latest star.

Born in Oviedo, the son of a former footballer – Juan Mata senior – Mata junior was brought up in Asturias, joining Real Oviedo's youth system. He signed for Real Madrid at 15, leaving home to live at Madrid's residence for young players and progressed quickly, but not quickly enough.

Although he scored nine times for Castilla (Madrid's B team) in the 2006-07 season, and had been part of Spain's Under-19 European Championship winning side, finishing second top scorer, the door to the first team at Madrid was locked. When it came to negotiating a new contract, they did not seem overly keen – and advised by his father and agent, Mata departed in search of better opportunities.

Valencia welcomed him but not exactly with open arms. Now 19, he was promising and clearly talented, but Sanchez Flores wanted him to go out on loan in the Second Division and gain experience; he was not ready, the coach judged, for the first team. Mata disagreed – and so, more importantly, did Koeman.

It helped that he ditched Miguel Angel Angulo from the squad and that Vicente was injured. But Koeman still showed remarkable faith in Mata, putting him into the side on the left of a front three, where he could cut in from the wing and dovetail perfectly with his fellow Asturian David Villa. Mata scored twice against Barcelona on the way to winning the Copa del Rey and was a virtual ever-present after Koeman took charge, playing 24 league games, and scoring five goals.

His vision, tenacity, skill and eye for goal had made him an undisputed first-team regular, and he began this season in the same rich vein of form. When Vicente Del Bosque called him up to the Spain squad, reading out his name at the federation's Las Rozas HQ, something almost unheard of happened – no one, but no one questioned the decision. Mata is intelligent, down to earth and immensely likeable, not to mention talented; everyone in Spain was delighted for him.

Well, almost everyone: across the other side of the Spanish capital, Real Madrid were busy kicking themselves over the one that got away.

Sid Lowe

Keith Harris
Premier League dealmaker

ENGLAND

KEITH HARRIS is 55, which means he grew up in the George Best, Denis Law and Bobby Charlton era, a golden age to support Manchester United. A poor kid from wrong side of the tracks, Harris worked hard in his adult life and advanced to be a senior investment banker at HSBC.

Like many Englishmen in suits and middle age, Harris' true love is not the documents of his working life, but football, which has always provided his escape to a more glorious world. And like many such lawyers, accountants or bankers, football's commercial era has allowed him to be involved in the game, even to shape its direction through his work.

His first public entry into the sport's administration was as Football League chairman during the 2002 liquidation of ITV Digital, which plunged league clubs into financial crisis. Harris did not seem truly comfortable in the role. He is entrepreneurial, a financial deal doer, while a chairman requires diplomatic negotiating skills, a niche which Lords Mawhinney (at the League) and Triesman (at the FA) are carving out as a real-life politicians.

Harris afterwards found his voice as the introducer and merchant banker in the series of mostly overseas club takeovers (see Dispatches, page 28), beginning with Roman Abramovich's purchase of Chelsea in 2003.

Harris prides himself on trying to find the right people, and a good outcome for the clubs, which is why he is proud of Randy Lerner's stewardship of Aston Villa, and why the experiences of Manchester City and West Ham have proved sobering. He is currently instructed to find buyers for Newcastle and Everton, which he admits will be difficult.

Whether this raft of takeovers is the right direction for English football is partly a matter of opinion. Only time will tell whether lifelong fans of Harris' generation are contributing to football in the best possible way, by importing their free-market, profit-driven work practices into the people's game.

David Conn

Negotiating foreign takeovers...Harris

Kiss goodbye?...Janko looks set to leave Salzburg

Marc Janko
Free-scoring striker topping wanted list across Europe

AUSTRIA

SALZBURG STRIKER Marc Janko is currently Europe's most lethal goal scorer and is being mentioned as a possible new recruit for Blackburn, Middlesbrough and Tottenham.

The 25-year-old Austrian, who is enjoying a runaway lead in the race for the European Golden Shoe, has also been linked with Sunderland, Hull City, Portsmouth and Everton along with Serie A club Roma and German sides Schalke and Hertha Berlin.

Janko has been in great form in the Austrian Bundesliga, scoring 27 goals in 19 matches and wiping out Oliver Bierhoff's club record of 23 for Salzburg. Now the £4million-rated national team star is ready for a move, saying: "I definitely want to play in the Premier League. Tottenham are certainly among my favourite clubs."

A move abroad in the January transfer window seems a realistic option. "We have had good talks with three English clubs and one has already relayed its interest in writing," says Janko's agent, Georg Stangassinger.

The 6ft 5in forward seems to have finally laid a long injury jinx and is now showing his predatory skill. Janko, whose mother, Eva, won an Olympic javelin bronze in 1968, has scored on average every 53 minutes this season for Salzburg as well as chalking up goals against Italy, France and Serbia for his country.

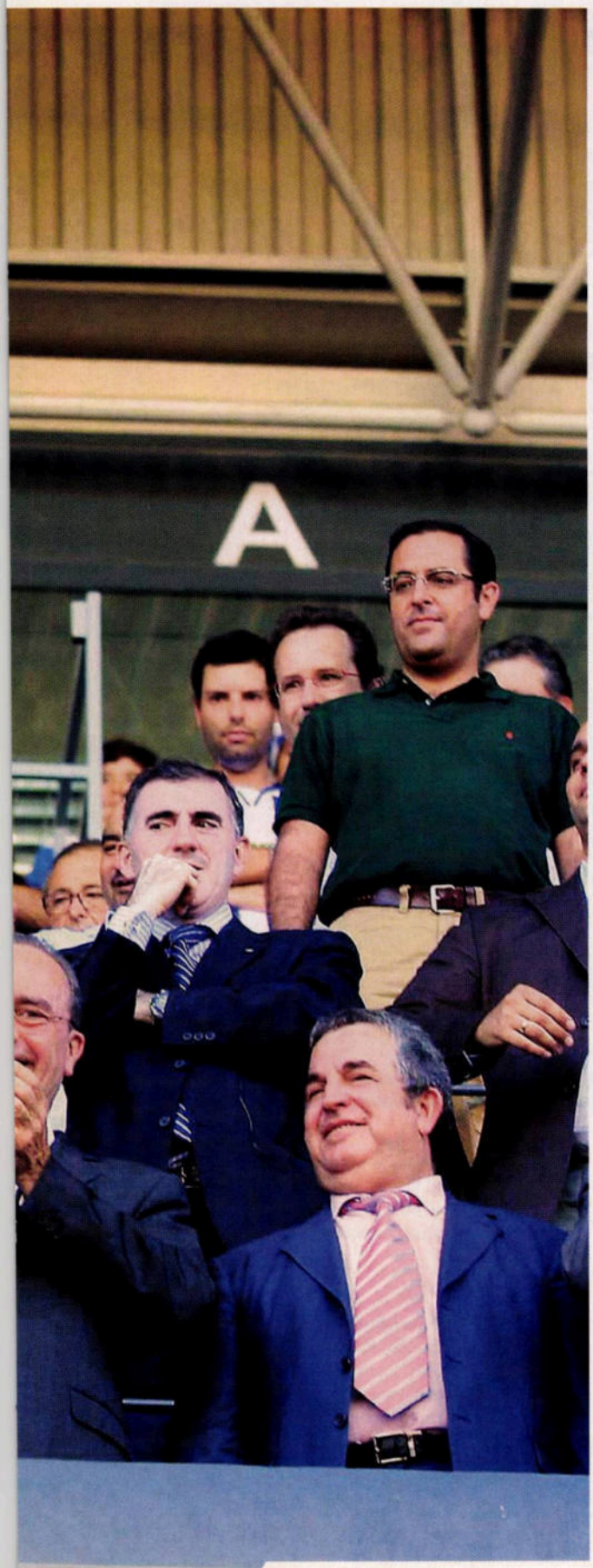
Blackburn have watched him several times, according to their scout Martin Glover, who says: "There is a good reason half of Europe are chasing him at the moment. Janko is top class and we would certainly like to have him on board."

Harry Miltner

'Sh*t, this is serious!'

Flag-bearer...Malaga president Fernando Sanz (wearing the replica shirt) celebrates his team's promotion to the top division on the final day of the 2007-08 season

Revelations about the final day of last season, when Malaga beat Tenerife in controversial circumstances, threaten to unleash a major match-fixing scandal



Sid Lowe
in MADRID

"TO TELL the truth, I don't remember..." "5,000 euros... 7,000 euros?" "Yes, around that, if not 7,000 then 6,000... I got paid and I didn't even play, so I assume the others collected too, don't you think?..."

The men talking are Real Sociedad president Inaki Badiola and the former Tenerife player Jesus Mora Nieto, "Jesuli." "There will have been players who didn't want to play but played and others who wanted to play precisely so that they could...", Jesuli continues, his voice trailing off. "It felt bad collecting the money, because it was *la Real* [who suffered as a result]. You're going to say 'why take it then?' but I wasn't just going to burn it, was I?"

"It's like everything in life: money ruins everything," he adds, before uttering the killer phrase: "*Se vendieron*."

Se vendieron. It means "they were bought," or "they sold themselves". The "they" in question were Tenerife, who had allegedly thrown a match to allow Malaga to get promoted to Spain's first division at the expense of Real Sociedad, ready for the 2008-09 season.

It has long been assumed (and, despite its illegality, tolerated if never openly admitted) that during the final weeks of the season "*maletines*" make their mark on Spanish football. These are third party payments designed to make teams with nothing to play for try a little harder. But here was something even worse: a team being paid to lose, not to win. A victory that had been bought. A game that had been fixed.

The scandal broke thanks to a taped conversation between an out-of-work footballer and a president who had previously complained of corruption in the game, particularly by Malaga, run by the Sanz family – ex-Real Madrid player Fernando, now the Malaga president, and his father, the former Real Madrid president Lorenzo.

Published by the newspaper *El Mundo*, the conversation, held in San Sebastian between Badiola and Jesuli, centres on the final day of the 2007-08 season when Tenerife travelled to Malaga with nothing to play for – except, alleges Jesuli, around 6,000 euros each for losing. Malaga were fighting for promotion to the First Division along with Real Sociedad, who were at home against Cordoba.

Jesuli stayed behind having suffered a broken nose. Without him, Tenerife lost 2-1. Malaga's second goal came from a penalty after captain Juanma had handballed; Tenerife's had been irrelevant, arriving in the 93rd minute with the game already lost.

Hidden camera evidence

The week before, Lorenzo Sanz had been accused of trying to buy his side's 1-0 victory over Sevilla Atletico. Hidden camera evidence provided by an agent suggested as much, as it showed him offering 250,000 euros (£210,000) for a victory. The threat of sanction still hung over Malaga even as they celebrated. Ultimately, though, Spain's *Comite de Disciplina Deportiva* (CDD, the Committee for Sporting Discipline) rejected the case: the evidence was not reliable enough and, besides, Lorenzo Sanz had no formal connection to Malaga – he was merely the president's father.

Malaga were up. Real Sociedad were not. But was promotion won fairly?

Six months later, with Jesuli having left Tenerife and now training with Sevilla Atletico, fresh evidence came to light; a second recording appeared – the conversation between Badiola and Jesuli, transcribed in *El Mundo* and posted on their website.

There are a number of unanswered questions. Where did the tape come from? Who wanted to leak it? Why was the conversation recorded, and who by? And why did the conversation even take place? It is, after all, a weird,

"There are lots of rumours that those of you who were playing for Tenerife got a bonus... for losing"

The recorded conversation between Sociedad president Inaki Badiola and former Tenerife player Jesuli

DISPATCHES

Controversial match...Malaga's 2-1 home victory over mid-table Tenerife, which secured their promotion on the final day of last season, is at the centre of the scandal

almost interrogation-style conversation between two men who had no real reason to be talking. Is Jesuli telling the truth? Why wouldn't he? Why speak up now? And can he really speak for everyone having not been at the game? But, on the face of it, the evidence looks damning.

In the recording, Badiola asks Jesuli, who used to play for Real Sociedad and had visited the Basque club, about the match. "The Second Division is horrible, a real hell," Badiola begins. "I have been president for 10 months and one of the things that has most disappointed me is that, frankly, football is rotten.

"Round here," he adds, "there are lots of rumours that those of you who were playing for Tenerife got a bonus... for losing."

At first Jesuli is reticent but eventually sketchy details begin to emerge: about how he didn't know the exact process undertaken by other players, but that he received payment in Seville; about how "almost everyone knew something strange was going on"; and about how he was "totally out of it [organisationally and logistically]" but "received money".

"You can't do anything if the whole group [is involved]", he adds by way of excuse for not making a stand, adding: "Shit, this is serious."

The fallout

It wasn't long before the fallout started. Not content with the release of the conversation, Badiola went a step further and accused Tenerife captain Juanma – the man who had given away the penalty – of having arranged the whole thing and claimed that "every single Tenerife player got paid". He then asked the Spanish football federation president Angel Maria Villar to "get his mop out" and clean up football. "All we ask for is justice," he insisted.

Badiola also launched another attack on the Sanz family, calling them "criminals and cheats", insisting: "I have nothing

against Malaga as a club or a city but these people should not be running a football club like they are."

The denials quickly flooded in. Lorenzo Sanz insisted it was all "bullshit", calling Badiola "football's cancer". Tenerife's squad gave a joint press conference, led by captain Cristo Marreo, in which he described the allegations as "false" and complained that they had been "accused of something we have nothing to do with".

Marreo continued: "We will not allow our professionalism to be questioned at any stage. We have behaved according to the values that define this club: professionalism, honesty and fair play."

As for Juanma, he insisted that he would investigate the possibility of taking "legal action against Badiola". He was not alone. Fernando Sanz announced that Malaga would begin legal actions against Jesuli if he did not retract his comments in the video.

Lawyer statement

Which was what Jesuli did, although not exactly. In a carefully-worded, prepared statement released by his lawyer, Jesuli insisted that "it is absurd to think that a player who could not even play in a match would earn money because of the result". He added that any attempt to fix a game "deserves reproach" and insisted that, never mind its content, the conversation between him and Badiola was "private" and recorded without his consent.

The statement was not a full denial and the following day another part of the conversation was released which seemed to suggest that Jesuli knew he was being recorded, while

Taped conversation...Socieded president Inaki Badiola and (inset) Jesuli

Threat...Tenerife's Juanma is talking of legal action against Sociedad's Badiola

Badiola – again, like Jesuli, Sanz, and Juanma, using language that appeared to be deliberately ambiguous – publicly insisted: "It would never cross my mind to record a conversation without someone's consent."

In this latest release Badiola and Jesuli were heard discussing what to say if the conversation between them got into the wrong hands, Jesuli reaching the conclusion that the best thing to do would be to "say nothing", while Badiola suggests he should complain that he never knew he was being recorded.

A criminal case

In the meantime, the CDD passed the details on to the public prosecutor to investigate as the accusations and counter-accusations fly. This is a criminal case now. If Jesuli's accusations are true, fraud could have been committed against Tenerife (who pay their players to win), against Real Sociedad, against the league, against the football federation, against the inland revenue (after all, if there were payments they were made cash in hand and undeclared), and against anyone who played the football pools that weekend.

It could mean a points deduction or a huge fine for Malaga, a club already on the brink financially. It could mean automatic relegation, it could mean promotion, and it could mean a jail sentences. It could yet encourage others to come out, new evidence to emerge, more accusations to be made, a real can of worms to be opened. It could even, at long last, prompt real investigation into the *maletines*. Or, sadly, it could kept swept under the carpet again.

"Shit, this is serious," said Jesuli on the tape. There may still be doubts over everything else he said, but on that particular score, he was absolutely right.

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

"Almost everyone knew something strange was going on"

Former Tenerife player Jesuli responds to questioning from Real Socieded president Inaki Badiola in the alleged taped conversation

DISPATCHES

First setback...Maradona walks out to take training before Argentina's friendly in Scotland but without Ruggeri (inset) his choice as assistant

Diego Maradona's stint as national coach began with a row about his choice of assistants

Storm over Oscar

Brian Homewood in BUENOS AIRES

AS A PLAYER, Oscar Ruggeri bludgeoned his way through 97 games for Argentina, winning one World Cup and two Copa America titles to become one of his country's most successful internationals. His coaching career, on the other hand, has been an extraordinary run of failure. It began reasonably well at San Lorenzo, when he was close to winning the championship in his first season. But it has been all downhill since then.

Known affectionately as Big Head, Ruggeri resigned at Mexico's Tecos UAG after losing his first six games in 2003, then returned home to join Independiente where he quit four months later after being jeered by fans at a home game.

In 2004, he tried his luck at Spanish second division club Elche but was fired after 20 games. Then he returned to Mexico and joined America, the country's richest club, and this time lasted six matches. In 2006, it was back to San Lorenzo where he was again fired after poor results including a 7-1 home defeat by Boca Juniors.

It is not exactly inspiring stuff yet Diego Maradona's insistence on hiring Ruggeri as his assistant has whipped up the first storm of his reign as Argentina coach.

Maradona originally announced that Sergio Batista and Jose Luis Brown, two more former team-mates from the 1986 World Cup-winning team, would be his assistants. It seemed a good move. The mild-mannered Batista appeared to be the perfect foil for the volatile Maradona and recently led Argentina to Olympic gold with an impressive 3-0 win over Brazil on the way. Brown had been working quietly in the background as coach of the Under-17 team.

Without warning, however, Maradona backtracked and, at his official presentation, said his assistant(s) had yet to be decided. Shortly afterwards, it emerged Ruggeri was top of his list. This quickly turned into a soap opera. With Maradona's opening game against Scotland only a week away, FA president Julio Grondona announced there was no way he would accept Ruggeri's presence in the coaching staff, saying: "I don't like his face. It's a personal thing."

Maradona, it was said, would not budge and speculation mounted that he could even quit over the matter only a week after taking over. In the end, Ruggeri defused the row by telling Maradona to go to Scotland without him and worry about it afterwards. "We'll speak again," he said. "I would be delighted to help but, if not, I will support him from the sidelines as I have always done."

Many critics had feared Maradona's appointment could turn the national side into something of a circus but few could have imagined for the entertainment to start so soon.

For most of Grondona's 29-year reign, the national side has become an oasis of tranquillity. All but two of his six coaches have completed the four-year cycle ending at a World Cup and those who failed to make it – Marcelo Bielsa and Alfio Basile – resigned rather than being sacked.

That is clearly going to change with Maradona at the helm. The Scotland friendly produced utter mayhem throughout his five-day stay in Glasgow – and it was the coach, rather than the players, who attracted the attention. For the media, it's a dream. Argentina has four 24-hour news channels, three cable sports channels and a host of radio stations, all desperate to fill airtime. Bielsa infuriated them by refusing to give exclusive interviews and hiding himself away on a farm outside Rosario. Maradona and his entourage, on the other hand, play exactly to the rules.

Someone in Maradona's party will leak information to one or two of the channels, who then flash it across the screen. Their rivals then follow suit. Hours of speculation and excitement follow as the anchors interview their own reporters. Then, rather conveniently, Maradona himself pops up on one or two of his favoured channels to give an "exclusive" interview clarifying the situation. Once that has happened, it's on to the analysis and ramifications which fill a few more hours. No wonder the media supported his appointment while the public thought it was a bad idea (roughly 70 per cent said they were opposed).

Shabby display

Maradona's appointment was clearly a bid to galvanise a team which had won one and drawn six of its previous eight matches. Since their shabby display at the 1990 World Cup, Argentina have cleaned up their act, concentrating on playing neat, attacking football. Unfortunately, they have failed to win anything since the Copa America in 1993 while a more physical, pragmatic Brazil have walked off with two World Cups and four Copa Americas in the same period.

The presence of Carlos Bilardo, Argentina's 1986 and 1990 World Cup coach, as "general manager" and Maradona's desire to bring in Ruggeri could be signs a more ruthless style is on the way back.

Now 69, the fast-talking Bilardo has cut a rather eccentric figure. During his last coaching stint with Estudiantes a couple years ago, he responded to allegations that he was taking the game too seriously by sitting on the touchline during one match next to a small table and sipping "champagne" from a glass. It turned out to be a sports drink.

But there are no doubts about Bilardo's attitude to fair play. During his playing days, he was known to take a pin on to the field and stick it into his opponents at inconvenient moments. As a coach, he would have his players smear heat cream on their fingers then rub it into an opponent's eyes during the match. And he has long been suspected of offering contaminated water to Brazil during the 1990 World Cup match.

Maradona next has a friendly in France in February. After that, the real business begins with eight World Cup qualifiers over six months. Argentina's position is far from comfortable. Although third in the 10-team group, they are ahead of Chile only on goal difference and three points clear of fifth place, whose final occupants will face a two-leg play-off against a CONCACAF side, possibly Mexico.

Their run-in is anything but easy as they still face trips to high-altitude Bolivia and Ecuador, meet Brazil at home and finish it all off by visiting neighbours and bitter rivals Uruguay. Maradona and co cannot afford to get it wrong.●

"I don't like his face. It's a personal thing"

FA president Julio Grondona does not mince words in his opposition to Ruggeri's appointment

DISPATCHES

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

So solid Crew...Columbus skipper Frankie Hejduck hoists the MLS Cup after the favourites' victory over New York Red Bulls

For once, the MLS Cup Final lived up to its billing

Happy ending

Paul Gardner in LOS ANGELES

MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER duly completed its 13th season with its Cup Final, played at the Home Depot Center in California. The climax of the year turned out to be a thoroughly satisfactory one. Where recent finals have been rather tepid affairs, this time Columbus Crew and New York Red Bulls put on a spirited game worthy of the occasion. As expected – for they were overwhelming favourites – Crew ran out winners, 3-1.

Crew had finished the regular season with the best record in the league, while Red Bulls had barely squeaked into the play-offs, the eighth and last team to qualify and, sniffed one rival general manager, "the worst team ever to reach the Final".

Possibly, but the Red Bulls carried a sympathy vote. They had at last, after 13 seasons of outstanding mediocrity, accomplished something. And they'd done it the hard way – by decisively beating Houston Dynamo, the reigning champions, 3-0 in Houston, and then with another away win, 1-0 against Real Salt Lake.

Juan Carlos Osorio, in his first year as the Red Bulls coach, had achieved something that a glittering array of former coaches – including Bora Milutinovic, Carlos Queiroz, Carlos Alberto Parreira and Bruce Arena – had not managed. He had reached the Final, and he had stirred some life into the team (which plays in and operates out of New Jersey). Something very welcome to MLS, for a strong New York franchise is considered an indispensible prerequisite for any successful pro sports league.

Basking in his triumph, Osorio proceeded to welcome criticism that he was a defensive coach, saying that he considered it more of a compliment. After all, he said, he had studied other American sports, and wasn't it true that they all agreed that "defence wins championships"?

In fact, Osorio had a pretty compelling reason for playing defensively – he was short of good players. A couple of weeks before the play-offs, defender Jeff Parke and goalkeeper Jon Conway, were each banned for 10 games for failing a drugs test. They had been taking a nutritional supplement which contained a banned substance, a steroid metabolite, ATD. Even though the substance was not listed on the packaging of the supplement, MLS Commissioner Don Garber came down hard on both players – the 10-game ban was the largest the league has given and seemed over-harsh for only the first drugs-related offence in MLS.

Then midfielder Seth Stammler was lost to knee surgery, while three South Americans brought in by Osorio – Venezuelans Gabriel Cichero and Jorge Rojas, and Argentinian Juan Pietravallo – proved much less effective than expected.

But the fear that Bulls would rely on solid defence in the Final – as they had done against Real Salt Lake – was quite unfounded. They took the game to Columbus in the first half, only to go in at half-time 1-0 down, victims of a smart piece of play from Crew's Argentinian spark-plug Guillermo Barros Schelotto, and a superb finish by Alejandro Moreno.

Undaunted, Bulls tied it up through John Wolyniec early in the second half, only to surrender the killer goal just two minutes later, when Crew defender Chad Marshall – well known as a threat on set plays – headed home a Schelotto corner. Late in the game another Crew defender, Frankie Hejduk, headed the insurance goal. As with the other two goals, Schelotto provided the assist and was voted the game's Most Valuable Player.

Answered the doubters

There could be no doubt that the better team had won. Crew coach Sigi Schmid could feel particularly pleased as he had answered his doubters – those at Los Angeles Galaxy, who fired him in 2004, even though the club were in first place at the time, and he had won the 2002 title with them.

All in all, it was, as Commissioner Garber remarked, a "good afternoon for soccer in America". The stadium was not full, though the empty seats were widely distributed, giving the impression of the "sell out" that MLS claimed. For the national TV broadcast, the game and the atmosphere were good, the ratings not so good.

There was one notable absentee during the events in Los Angeles leading up to game day – they included a gala awards dinner – and that was the league's major attraction, David Beckham, who lives a longish stone's throw from the stadium. At the moment, Garber and Galaxy are still making every conceivable excuse for Beckham's errant behaviour, but one wonders how much longer such tolerance can be maintained in the face of his repeated disparagement of his American duties.

At the very least it must surely dawn on the Americans that Beckham's actions only help to confirm the view of many Europeans that MLS is not to be taken too seriously.

Beckham has become a distraction, the very opposite of what he was supposed to be, and something MLS definitely can do without. The road to success is not easy for a new sport breaking into the pro ranks, trying to create fans, attract sponsors and ensure financial stability. This last consideration has led MLS to axe its reserve team league – which had involved considerable travel expenses, and, it was felt, was not helping to strengthen senior teams.

On top of all that, MLS is not immune to one of world soccer's current plagues, the overcrowded calendar. MLS teams have a 30-game league schedule, plus play-offs, and games in the Open Cup, while selected teams play in the SuperLiga (against Mexican teams) and in the CONCACAF Champions League. The best teams this past season – Houston, DC United and New England Revolution – played in all four competitions. Only DC United won anything, the least prestigious Open Cup. Significantly, both MLS Cup Finalists played only in the league and the Open Cup.

The national team, meanwhile, put forward a strong claim to have replaced Mexico as CONCACAF's leading team as they waltzed into the final qualifying group for World Cup 2010. Bob Bradley has benefited from the increasing number of players with overseas clubs, which has given him a far wider variety of experience to choose from than any previous national coach.●

> "The fear that Red Bulls would rely on solid defence proved unfounded as they took the game to Columbus"

DISPATCHES

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

Serie A playboy...but despite his revelations, Cassano is enjoying a new lease of life on the field with Sampdoria after a chequered past at Roma and Real Madrid

'Bad boy' Cassano's steamy autobiography is a manual for the modern footballer

Oh, oh, Antonio...

Paddy Agnew in ROME

WHEN ANTONIO CASSANO opted to write a book, it was never going to be dull. There are those unkind folk who point out that, with the publication of *Dico Tutto* (I Tell All), 26-year-old Sampdoria striker Cassano has managed the remarkable feat of writing more books than he has read.

What is for sure is that his account of the life and times of the modern superstar would have coaches of another generation, the likes of Bill Shankly or Vittorio Pozzo, spinning in their graves. Cassano makes no secret of just how much he owes to football, saying: "I was born poor, but I have to point out that I've never worked in my life, for the good reason that I don't know how to do anything."

According to the Cassano 'Manual For The Young Footballer', a key element in the preparation for a big game is a night of hot and heavy sex. The fact that teams are usually locked up in their pre-match *ritiro* is apparently no problem for Cassano. For example, when he was at Roma, he obtained a key to one of the gates at the back of their Trigoria training ground, the complex used by the club for the pre-match vigil. Using this key, he would admit his lady for the night and from there they would head for the physio's couch in a youth team dressing room for fun and games.

All of this, claims Cassano, did him nothing but good. You do not believe him? Just look again at Roma's memorable 4-0 home win over Juventus in February 2004, a game won thanks to a double from Cassano and goals from Olivier Dacourt and Francesco Totti. The night before, he had been up until 6am making merry with his lady of the moment. If he has difficulty remembering her name, it is not because he wishes to spare her blushes. No, given that he claims to have made love to anything between 600 and 700 women, perhaps he simply has difficulty recalling just who it was that particular night.

Almost a delinquent

With disarming honesty, the poor boy from Bari calls himself a *"delinquente mancato"* (someone who, thanks to football, narrowly missed out on being a delinquent). On the way home at 4am after another of his "hot and heavy" nights out on the town, Cassano had a bad accident caused entirely by himself, given that he was driving at the time with a mobile phone in either hand, one for sending text messages and the other for ringing his mates.

Aware that his self-generated accident would not look good to the traffic police, Cassano claims that before he rang the emergency services he summoned his cousin to the accident scene. When he arrived, Cassano wiped a bit of blood on his face and made out that it had been his cousin at the wheel. After all, he adds, he had paid good money for that licence in Bari and did not want to have it suspended.

Dico Tutto, subtitled "If It Gets Too Hot, I'll Play In The Shade", and co-written with Sky Italia TV journalist, Pierluigi Pardo, is unlikely to win a Nobel Prize for literature. Nor, one imagines, will it much move national team coach Marcello Lippi. Yet, such has been Cassano's splendid form for Sampdoria this autumn, that there are those who wonder why Lippi apparently has no room for him in his current World Cup qualifying team. One suspects that the Cassano debate is likely to hound Lippi for much of this winter and forthcoming spring.

Lippi could well argue that just at the moment he does not seem to need the Sampdoria striker. When Italy drew 1-1 with Greece in Athens in a November friendly, Lippi took his unbeaten run to 31 consecutive games, thus becoming the most successful Italian coach of modern times and going one better than the legendary Pozzo, coach to the dual World Cup winners of the 1930s.

Limited experiments

Italy came from behind to draw with Greece with Bayern Munich striker Luca Toni, the man who looked like he could not hit a barn door during Euro 2008, getting a much needed goal after Theofanis Gekas had put the home side in front. As he had promised, Lippi used the game to make some limited experiments, giving a first cap to Napoli midfielder Christian Maggio and a second outing and first full cap to Villarreal striker Giuseppe Rossi. Both the new boys did well, much helped by the fact they lined out alongside experienced players such as Fabio Cannavaro in defence, Gennaro Gattuso in midfield and Toni in attack.

Back home, the November highlight was undoubtedly the battle of Chelsea Old Boys when Internazionale, coached by the 'Special One' Jose Mourinho, beat Claudio Ranieri's Juventus 1-0 at San Siro to remain top of Serie A. Even if Inter won by the minimum distance, this was an emphatic victory and one which prompted the ever-honest Ranieri to admit afterwards that the best team had won.

Inter's win in this eagerly-awaited clash prompted two immediate considerations. Firstly, the Mourinho effect is clearly beginning to make itself felt with the team that, even before his arrival this summer, was already the strongest in the land. Secondly, the Italian title contest may yet develop into an internal Milan city contest with such as Roma, Juventus, Fiorentina and Udinese in the role of interested bystanders. Remember that, so far, the only serious setback encountered by Mourinho in Italy was his 1-0 derby defeat by Milan at the end of September.

Having landed the "big one", Inter then took their eye off the ball a little, losing 1-0 next time out in a Champions League game at home to Panathinaikos. Ironically, despite that defeat they still found themselves mathematically qualified for the knockout stages by the end of the night.

Back at San Siro four days later, however, Inter put things to rights beating Napoli 2-1 to go six points clear of joint second-placed Juventus and Milan.

And thereby hangs a tale... The days when Lazio, Napoli and Udinese were out front leading Serie A did not last long. We are right back there with the usual suspects, namely Juventus, Inter and Milan dominating the Italian championship. Surprise, surprise.

> **"According to Cassano, a key element in the preparation for a big game is a night of hot and heavy sex"**

DISPATCHES

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

Is our number up?...West Ham's Carlton Cole and Craig Bellamy reflect on a club without a sponsor and suffering as a by-product of the major downturn in chairman Bjorgolfur Gudmundsson's fortunes

Premier League clubs are still seeking wealthy backers despite the global financial crisis

Credibility for sale

David Conn in LONDON

KEITH HARRIS, the prominent deal-maker for the many English clubs desperately seeking a takeover, spoke to the International Football Arena in Zurich in November, warming to his theme that English football is in rude and cheery health. He derided the public warning given by Lord Triesman, the FA chairman, that debts in the English game are up to £3billion and "at high risk levels" in a global economic crisis. Harris scorned the challenges posed persistently by UEFA president Michel Platini, about where foreign ownership of clubs, dominance of overseas players and coaches is sending the game's English identity.

Harris, a City of London merchant banker, is wrestling with the financial downturn in his daily work, but he talked up the Premier League's fortunes, and described as inevitable the continued takeovers of clubs – which, incidentally, he is paid handsomely to facilitate.

Yet speaking to journalists afterwards, a more nuanced picture emerged from Harris' experiences in football finance. He reflected that of the four most recent club deals he has introduced and worked on as the merchant banker (his first, Roman Abramovich's purchase of Chelsea, was in 2003), Aston Villa's takeover by the US credit card magnate Randy Lerner, and Hull City's by Essex property investor Russell Bartlett, have gone swimmingly so far.

Corruption charges

However, two others turned quickly into basket cases. Thaksin Shinawatra, the former Thai Prime Minister, was advised by Harris when he bought Manchester City for £21.6million in June last year. At the time Harris and the club's directors rejected any suggestion that the longstanding allegations of human rights abuses by Thaksin, even the corruption charges laid against him in Thailand and the freezing of his assets, meant a football club ought to be cautious about being owned by the man.

As it turned out, both Thaksin and his wife were found guilty on corruption charges and fled the country. Just before Harris gave his address in Zurich, the UK immigration minister Phil Woolas refused the Shinawatras permission to enter the country. "The briefing said, quite rightly, [Thaksin] has been charged with fraud and he's not a desirable person," the minister said – a clear-eyed view of which football's custodians had been incapable.

Harris acknowledged that lessons should be learned, that football clubs should not, after all, be sold to a person facing criminal prosecution. He accepted that his City deal had turned out badly, and, admirably, did not try to avoid the issue by pointing out that, in the shape of Sheikh Mansour of Abu Dhabi, truly one of the richest men on earth, it seems to have turned out happily ever after for the club.

Harris was also the banker when the very wealthy Icelander Bjorgulfur Gudmundsson bought West Ham United for £85m in November 2006. The club were not in financial difficulties; they had stabilised after relegation in 2003, but only by selling what became half an England team: keeper David James, defender Glen Johnson, midfielders Joe Cole and Michael Carrick (Frank Lampard had gone to Chelsea for £11m in 2001) and striker Jermain Defoe. Chairman Terry Brown, never the first love of the Upton Park bubble-blowing faithful after that, made £44m personally from selling his shares to Gudmundsson, who was to spend considerable money building the Hammers up.

Unlike the US owners at Manchester United and Liverpool, Gudmundsson did not fund his takeover with debt loaded on to the club. He paid cash, and then invested another £30m into West Ham, much of which was spent in a rash of signings by the first Icelandic chairman, Eggert Magnusson, who was soon replaced.

Then, this autumn, the credit crunch bit, Iceland's bank-based wealth melted down and the wheels came off. Landsbanki, in which Gudmundsson's company had a 40 per cent stake, was nationalised, losing him £250m. Two of his other companies are in insolvency procedures, and much of his wealth is in Icelandic *krona*, which has collapsed. His advisor and West Ham's vice chairman, Asgeir Fridgeirsson, did not seek to make light of the extent of the damage. "Mr Gudmundsson's fortune has been severely affected by the global credit crunch, and the extreme nature of things in Iceland of course put pressure on him as an investor," Fridgeirsson acknowledged.

It seems inevitable that West Ham will be sold; indeed Harris expected to be instructed to do so, almost exactly two years since he sold it to Gudmundsson. Harris pointed out that "nobody could have envisaged" the scale and speed of Iceland's economic collapse which took Gudmundsson with it, but nevertheless this experience does suggest that the road to salvation for a football club may not necessarily lie with being flogged off to an investor.

Harris cautioned that fans will have to accept that not all deals will go well in the turbulent current climate. He said, too, that likely buyers are hesitating now, wondering if this is really the right time to be buying what he describes as "essentially trophy assets".

Premier League football is still, as Sheikh Mansour described it when he took over City, "one of the greatest entertainment products in the world." But despite all the scorn thrown at Triesman, and Platini for their warnings about debt, the financial make-up of the leading clubs, in particular, is not above concern.

There is Abramovich, putting in £578m as an interest-free loan to transform Chelsea. Premier League and European champions United owed, at the last accounts, £667m, with swingeing interest charges, the cost of being taken over by the Glazer family in 2005. Liverpool have a £350m facility with two banks which have been badly hit, Royal Bank of Scotland and Wachovia. Arsenal owe £260m, borrowed to build the Emirates Stadium, and unlikely, in the current property slump, to reap the planned bonanza from the plush apartments they have built at Highbury.

The message seems to be that the Premier League, rich, international, all-conquering, still sparkles, but there is plenty of grit in the detail.●

> "Likely buyers are wondering if this is really the right time to be buying what Harris describes as essentially trophy assets"

DISPATCHES

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

Cap that...Rubin Kazan's Christian Noboa and Sergei Ryzhikov celebrate their league triumph and the prospect of Champions League football

Rubin Kazan claimed their first league title in impressive style

Ruby dazzlers

Victor Gusev in MOSCOW

RUSSIAN FOOTBALL's most successful international season for 20 years ended with a major surprise at home when Rubin Kazan won the League, eclipsing the Moscow clubs plus defending champions and UEFA Cup holders Zenit St. Petersburg.

Rubin, which means "ruby" in Russian, were only promoted to the Premier League in 2003. They finished 10th last season but this year was always going to be special for the club as they celebrated turning 50. Rubin have been lavishly supported by their sponsors and the local government (Kazan is the capital of the ambitious Russian republic of Tatarstan, on the Volga river).

The financial support has enabled some impressive purchases, including national team captain Sergei Semak, one of the key figures in Russia's run to the semi-finals of Euro 2008, Serbian striker Savo Milosevic and Turkey midfielder Gokdeniz Karadeniz.

Long-serving manager Kurban Berdyev saw his team begin the league campaign with a record seven straight victories and they never gave up top spot. They wrapped up the title with three games to spare when Milosevic's late goal gave them a 2-1 win over Saturn in Ramenskoye. Even losing their last three games could not take the gloss off their achievement and Champions League qualification for the first time.

Although they were criticised by some Moscow media for their defensive style of play, Rubin still set a record for non-Moscow teams by beating all four capital-based clubs – Dinamo, Spartak, Lokomotiv and FC Moscow – on their home grounds. And the new international sensations Zenit were routed both home and away.

Zenit, Russia's richest club, splashed out a domestic record £26million on Portuguese midfielder Danny but despite their big spending could finish only fifth and will have to settle for a place in the Europa League (UEFA Cup) next season. But without Champions League football Zenit are almost sure to lose key players, including Andrei Arshavin, the country's highest-paid footballer, and Ukraine captain Anatoliy Tymoshchuk.

Arshavin, the tiny playmaker who inspired Russia to their best European performance since the USSR won silver in 1988, received a number of lucrative offers from top European clubs, including Barcelona. But Zenit's owner Gazprom, the country's largest energy company, was unwilling to let him go and asked for £20million. The most any club offered was £12million. Despite the offer of a huge pay rise, Arshavin has insisted that he still wants to move abroad and could well go in the January transfer window.

That has not stopped Zenit coach Dick Advocaat extending his own contract for another year. The Dutchman had been on the verge of leaving for the Australian national team after the victorious 2007 season but backtracked after reportedly being offered an annual salary of £2m.

At the other end of the table, veteran playmaker Yegor Titov helped save Khimki from relegation. Titov, 32, sensationally dropped by Spartak Moscow following Spartak's 5-1 rout by arch-rivals CSKA in July, moved to Khimki, based in the Moscow suburbs, and was the driving force in their successful fight against the drop.

Luch-Energiya went down instead – sparing other teams the torturous nine-hour flight to Vladivistok next season – as did Shinnik Yaroslalvl. Replacing them will be Rostov and Kuban Krasnodar, both returning after a year-long absence.

Spartak, now coached by former Denmark icon Michael Laudrup, could finish only sixth. The nine-times champions had finished runners-up in the previous three seasons, incurring the wrath of their legions of fans. A 1-0 victory over CSKA in November was their only consolation.

Laudrup, who joined in September and is under contract for another year, has been promised big-name winter signings by Spartak's oil company owners Lukoil. Spartak desperately need new blood, primarily a striker to replace top-scoring Roman Pavlyuchenko, now with Tottenham. But the situation is uncertain because of the fluctuating fortunes of the global oil market.

Foreign quotas

There will be more emphasis on home-grown players next season, not only because of the world financial crisis, but also the introduction of new foreign-player quotas. From next season, teams will be allowed to field no more than six non-Russian players.

CSKA's Brazil striker Vagner Love, one of the few foreign signings who did not disappoint, finished League leading scorer with 20 goals. He lost strike partners Jo (to Manchester City) and Daniel Carvalho (on loan at Internacional) but linked particularly well with homegrown starlet Alan Dzagoev (see Talent Scout, page 65). The pair played their part in CSKA's late surge but it was not enough to close the gap on Rubin and Valeri Gazzayev's team were left with runners-up spot and the Russian Cup they won in May.

Dinamo Moscow finished third, having shown great improvement under young coach Andrei Kobelev. The white-and-blues won their last national title in 1976 and have mostly stayed in the shadow ever since.

Dinamo will be renting Khimki Arena outside Moscow for a number of years while their stadium, dubbed "the Russian Wembley", is fully rebuilt. The ground, situated close to the city centre, was built 80 years ago and is firmly linked with the name of Lev Yashin, Dinamo hero and the Soviet Union's greatest goalkeeper.

Yashin's name was the subject of a disgraceful banner displayed by Zenit fans at their team's last home match of the season, against Dinamo, which read: "Your Yashin croaked, so will Dinamo." It caused a wave of indignation across Russia and the perpetrators were banned from the stadium for life, while Zenit were ordered to play their next League game behind closed doors.

The story revived discussion of racist abuse at stadiums. Swastikas and fascist flags, as well as anti-Chechen and anti-black banners were spotted during the season in Yaroslavl, Samara, Moscow and other cities. Black players were often booed and bananas thrown on to the pitch but penalties, if any, involved only minor fines.●

> "Rubin set a record by beating all the Moscow clubs on their home grounds and also routed defending champions Zenit home and away"

DISPATCHES

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

Full stretch...Gamba's Yohei Fukumoto tussles with Scott Jamieson of Adelaide United during the Champions League Final second leg

The Osaka side's victory over Adelaide United in the Asian Champions League Final underlined the strength of the Japanese club game

Gamba strike gold

Mike Plastow in TOKYO

SO, GAMBA OSAKA are the champions of Asia. They have not been champions of Japan since 2005 and would not even qualify for the 2009 tournament on this year's league form, but what a convincing triumph!

After stumbling to a disappointing 1-1 home draw at Chonburi of Thailand in the opening match, Gamba stormed through their group unbeaten ahead of Chunnam Dragons and Melbourne Victory, cruised through the knock-out stage with comfortable wins over Al-Karamah and reigning champions Urawa Reds, and then crushed Adelaide United 5-0 on aggregate in the final.

Not only has Japan won the Asian Champions League twice in a row, it has done so this time with a slightly ordinary J.League side. Now that the South Korean clubs, especially, are fading from the scene – not one made it to the quarter-finals, compared with three from Japan – even the arrival of Australia in the AFC has done little to dilute the feeling that, at long last, the Japanese really are the teams to beat. And it will get harder next year when four of their clubs qualify for the AFC's premier tournament.

For the marketers, of course, this is great news. What could be better for TV than the massed hordes of Reds fans at Saitama Stadium, or a Japan-Australia Final like this year's that generates extensive, if not yet global, interest?

For the J.League, this moment really has been a long time in coming. It has been providing the model for other Asian associations ever since kicking off in 1993. It laid on everything for the players: well-paid jobs, training facilities, stadiums, media attention, foreign coaches, outstanding foreign team-mates, youth coaching structures. The lot.

The national team was quick to benefit and now seem reasonably on course to qualify for their fourth consecutive World Cup, never having qualified before the J.League began.

For the clubs, however, it has been a different story. Two (Furukawa and Yomiuri, now JEF Chiba and Tokyo Verdy, respectively) won Asia's premier club tournament in the pre-J.League era but Jubilo Iwata in 1999 had long remained its only winners until Reds' triumph last year.

Weren't the clubs good enough until now? That may have been true but the key answer surely lies in a change of mentality that is very easy to explain. The arrival of the Club World Cup in Japan in 2005 changed the landscape completely. Until then, the Asian club tournaments received only minimal media or fan attention in Japan. The local media and fans did not know the opponents, and players and coaches had little thirst for the long, midweek slogs around Asia in the middle of their tight league season.

Now, most of that has changed. The long slogs remain, and may even have cost Urawa Reds their league title last year, but the carrot has grown enormous with the prospect of Reds playing Milan in 2007, or Gamba playing Manchester United in December. Needless to say, this has become an incredible incentive for Asian football as a whole, not just football in Japan.

The Club World Cup has its detractors; understandably so. Who can give real credence to a global club ranking that reads: 1 Milan; 2 Boca Juniors; 3 Urawa Reds; 4 Etoile Sahel, which was how it ended last year? Make no mistake, though, the cup has galvanised football in this part of the world.

Having noted the dreadful lopsidedness of the old Asian club tournaments, it would be dishonest not to address the lopsidedness of the FIFA club tournament, too. Passing quickly over the question of Oceania now that Australia is in the AFC, what will happen if Gamba play United?

Well, last year Milan beat Reds comfortably 1-0 in the semi-final but there was no question of a thrashing. After the tournament, Reds manager Holger Osieck was serious when saying his players might have reached the Final if they had met Boca Juniors in the semis.

United's Park Ji-Sung, of course, knows what to expect. He has played three seasons in the J.League, in both divisions, at Gamba's near neighbours Kyoto Sanga. This should be a real match, worth seeing and played in a good atmosphere, between clubs that have to learn about each other as the game proceeds.

Immense experience

Gamba may not have clicked in the league this season but they are a mature team with immense experience, led now for seven seasons by Akira Nishino, the longest-serving and arguably most respected club manager in Japan.

Players to watch include quality defenders on both wings, 2006 World Cup right back Akira Kaji and young Michihiro Yasuda, who has recently broken into the national team, on the left. Midfield is anchored by 2002 World Cup midfielder Tomokazu Myojin and Hideo Hashimoto, who still plays for Japan off and on and may have the most dependable covering instincts of any player in the Japanese game. Takahiro Futagawa and Hayato Sasaki are tireless chance makers.

The undoubted star of midfield, though, is Yasuhito Endo, who also played in Germany in 2006 and was named player of the tournament in this year's AFC Champions League. He performs a key creative role alongside Shunsuke Nakamura in Takeshi Okada's national team and shares many of Nakamura's pinpoint passing and dead ball skills. Well able to play either defensive or attacking roles, he might just pull off the sorts of surprise that Nakamura did for Celtic against Manchester United in 2006.

Gamba's attack looks rather thin by comparison, but Brazilian striker Lucas has a good J.League record and Ryuji Bando has also been in and out of the national team during the past three years.

It is also significant that this team have not made their mark in this year's J.League. It has always been closely fought and this year was no exception with almost nothing to choose between the top six teams in the final run-in – and the new Asian champions weren't one of them!

The most salient point of all is that the clubs are still all improving together. Combined with the recent successes in Asia, that has to be good for the Japanese game. The message for others is that you have to watch out, whichever Japanese club you now happen to play.

● *Club World Cup teams, overleaf*

> **"Even the arrival of Australia in the AFC has done little to dilute the feeling that, at long last, Japanese teams really are the ones to beat"**

DISPATCHES

THE CONTENDERS

Gamba Osaka

Manchester United

LDU Quito

Pachuca

Waitakere United

Adelaide United

Al Ahly

Gamba Osaka (Jap)
Asian club champions following their victory last month over Adelaide United. Competition debut.
Coach: Akira Nishino, long-standing boss in charge since 2002.
Key Man: Yasuhito Endo, set-piece specialist and important creative figure in midfield.

Manchester United (Eng)
European champions for the third time last May when beating Chelsea on penalties in Moscow. Won Intercontinental Cup against Palmeiras in 1999 but lost famously violent two-leg affair with Estudiantes in 1968.
Coach: Alex Ferguson. See page 38.
Key Man: Cristiano Ronaldo, who else? Will be keen to confirm status as world's best player.

LDU Quito (ECU)
Liga Deportiva Universitaria Quito, Ecuador's biggest club, were surprise winners on penalties over Fluminense in Libertadores Cup Final.
Coach: Edgardo Bauza, former Argentina international who led LDU to 2007 Ecuadorian title in his first season in charge.
Key Man: Luis Bolanas, former striker turned speedy winger and likely to move to Europe after the tournament.

Pachuca (Mex)
Mexican winners of CONCACAF Champions Cup for past two seasons but surprisingly beaten by Tunisia's Etoile Sahal in last year's Club World Cup.
Coach: Enrique Meza, one of Mexico's most experienced and successful coaches who had brief spell in charge of national team in 2000.
Key Man: Miguel Calero, Colombian keeper who doubles up as Pachuca skipper.

Waitakere United (NZ)
New Zealand part-timers who lost preliminary round play-off to Iran's Sepahan last year.
Coach: Chris Milicich, local man who won the New Zealand league title with Mount Wellington as a player.
Key Man: Danny Hay, experienced captain who had a brief spell in England at Leeds United before a longer stay at Walsall.

Adelaide United (Aus)
A-League club who lost to Gamba Osaka in Asian Champions League Final last month and have sneaked into the competition because of the rule that prevents two Japanese teams from taking part. Adelaide have taken place set aside for Japanese hosts (usually the J.League champions) after Gamba won 2008 Asian title.
Coach: Aurelio Vidmar, former Australian international forging reputation as a coach.
Key Man: Travis Dodd, captain who weighs in with plenty of goals from midfield.

Al Ahly (Egy)
African champions and arguably the continent's most successful club side after winning African Champions League again last month.
Coach: Manuel Jose, Portuguese who has masterminded four of Al Ahly's six Champions League triumphs.
Key Man: Mohamed Aboutrika, technically gifted striker who was one of the stars of Egypt's 2008 African Nations Cup victory.

MATCH SCHEDULE

Preliminary round
Dec 11: Adelaide Utd v Waitakere United (Tokyo)

Quarter-finals
Dec 13: Al Ahly v Pachuca (Mex) (Tokyo)
Dec 14: Winners Preliminary Round v Gamba Osaka (Toyota)

Semi-finals
Dec 17: QF1 winners v LDU Quito (Tokyo)
Dec 18: QF2 winners v Manchester United (Yokohama)

Fifth-place play-off
Dec 18: Losers QF1 v losers QF2 (in Yokohama)

Third-place play-off
Dec 21: (Yokohama)

Final
Dec 21: (Yokohama)

That and much more is waiting for you at www.goalunited.org. Best to register now and join the exciting world of goalunited.

Are you manager enough for it? Then prove it, in goalunited. It is the start for your career. Compete with others and advance to the highest league. Gather trophies and become a professional. You want to compete with your friends and not with unknown people? Not a problem! In goalunited you can create your own cups and leagues. And invite your friends to those events. Show them who is the better manager and win the trophy. Show, that you are something special, create your own club emblems and choose cool jerseys for your squad.

You will get the responsibility for your own club. Your tasks will be to get to the top. Buy and sell players, show your negotiation skills with sponsors, support your youth and build an international arena as stadium. Choose the right strategy, tactics and your formation to become the best manager.

"More than 850.000 managers! Play goalunited in your favorite browser! No installation required!"

10 hints for a good start

1. Choose a well balanced training, it is the key to success, don't train an ability with more than 3 training units (boxes)

2. Keep an eye on the freshness of your players – rested players play and train better. Train with high intensity, play with low engagement and keep the freshness above 50

3. Get a physiotherapist as soon as possible, he is responsible for your players regeneration

4. Increase your income: Get a sponsor and expand your stadium to 5000 seats.

5. Add some new young players to your squad: Get to the transfer market and by about 2-3 player in the age of 18-21 (young players train better)

6. Expand your team to the max of 25 players, because the more player you have the more player train

8. Get a better trainer, because he increases the training output and increases the performance of your squad in a match

9. Make long-term plans and don't get too depressed by suffering a small setback

10. Give the players you plan to keep long some long-term contracts, this way the costs (salary) for them is lower

■ **http://www.goalunited.org**

WorldSoccer AWARDS 2008

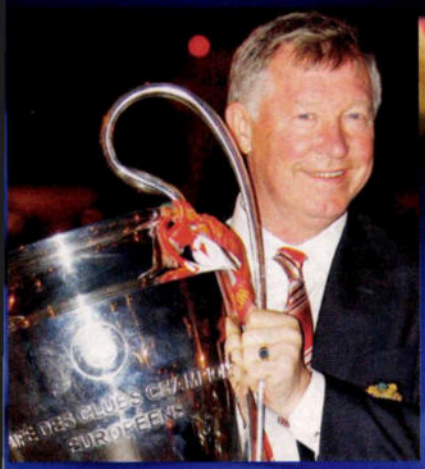
WINNERS

CRISTIANO RONALDO

World Player of the Year

LIONEL MESSI

Young Player of the Year



ALEX FERGUSON

World Manager of the Year

Cristiano Ronaldo, star performer in Manchester United's Champions League triumph, is *World Soccer's* player of the year for 2008. The Portugal winger was the clear winner in our 27th annual poll, with Barcelona's Lionel Messi second and Fernando Torres of Liverpool in third place.

Ronaldo is the first United player to win the individual prize, while last year's winner, Kaka, did not even make the top 10. Instead, five of the top 10 places are taken by members of Spain's victorious team at Euro 2008 – Torres, captain Iker Casillas, David Villa, Xavi and Marcos Senna.

Spain triumphed in the Team of the Year catagory, ahead of Manchester United, UEFA Cup-winners Zenit and Libertadores Cup-winners LDU Quito. African champions Egypt, who successfully defended their title last January, finished fifth and there was also recognition for the achievements of CFL Cluj, Hoffenheim and Anorthosis Famagusta.

Alex Ferguson won the Manager of the Year award for a record fourth time, a clear winner ahead of Spain's Luis Aragones and Zenit's Dick Advocaat. Egypt's Hassan Shehata, one of the few African-born coaches to manage a team at the Nations Cup, finished fourth, while Guus Hiddink's achievements with Euro 2008 semi-finalists Russia was recognised with his fifth place.

Lionel Messi was the clear winner of the Young Player award, ahead of Atletico Madrid's Sergio Aguero and Lyon's Karim Benzema.

Votes were cast from 45 different countries, again demonstrating the global nature of *World Soccer's* readership.

SPAIN

World Team of the Year

HOW YOU VOTED

WORLD PLAYER OF THE YEAR		% of votes
1	Cristiano Ronaldo (Manchester United & Portugal)	48.4
2	Lionel Messi (Barcelona & Argentina)	15.1
3	Fernando Torres (Liverpool & Spain)	13.6
4	Iker Casillas (Real Madrid & Spain)	5.7
5	Xavi (Barcelona & Spain)	5.1
6	David Villa (Valencia & Spain)	2.1
7	Andrei Arshavin (Zenit St Petersburg & Russia)	1.4
8	Marcos Senna (Villarreal & Spain)	0.7
9	Franck Ribery (Bayern Munich & France)	0.6
10	Zlatan Ibrahimovic (Internazionale & Sweden)	0.5
	Others	6.8

WORLD TEAM OF THE YEAR		
1	Spain	41.1
2	Manchester United	29.2
3	Zenit St Petersburg	9.1
4	LDU Quito	5.8
5	Egypt	4.4
6	CFR Cluj	1.2
7	Argentina	1.1
8	Hoffenheim	0.9
9	Russia	0.8
10	Anorthosis Famagusta	0.6
	Others	5.8

WORLD MANAGER OF THE YEAR		
1	Alex Ferguson (Manchester United)	37.8
2	Luis Aragones (Spain)	28.8
3	Dick Advocaat (Zenit St Petersburg)	17.1
4	Hassan Shehata (Egypt)	3.5
5	Guus Hiddink (Russia)	2.8
6	Cesare Prandelli (Fiorentina)	1.4
7	Fatih Terim (Turkey)	1.2
8	Muricy Ramalho (Sao Paulo)	0.9
9	Phil Brown (Hull City)	0.8
10	Roberto Mancini (Internazionale)	0.5
	Others	5.2

YOUNG PLAYER OF THE YEAR		
1	Lionel Messi (Barcelona & Argentina)	44.2
2	Sergio Aguero (Atletico Madrid & Argentina)	20.1
3	Karim Benzema (Lyon & France)	10.2
4	Cesc Fabregas (Arsenal & Spain)	5.3
5	Anderson (Manchester United & Brazil)	2.8
6	Pato (Milan & Brazil)	2.1
7	Bojan Krkic (Barcelona & Spain)	1.4
8	Theo Walcott (Arsenal & England)	1.1
9	Sebastian Giovinco (Empoli/Juventus & Italy)	0.9
10	Carlos Vela (Osasuna/Arsenal & Mexico)	0.6
	Others	11.3

PREVIOUS WINNERS

WORLD PLAYER		% of votes
1982	Paolo Rossi (Juventus & Italy)	23
1983	Zico (Udinese & Brazil)	28
1984	Michel Platini (Juventus & France)	54
1985	Michel Platini (Juventus & France)	21
1986	Diego Maradona (Napoli & Argentina)	36
1987	Ruud Gullit (Milan & Holland)	39
1988	Marco Van Basten (Milan & Holland)	43
1989	Ruud Gullit (Milan & Holland)	24
1990	Lothar Matthäus (Internazionale & West Germany)	22
1991	Jean-Pierre Papin (Marseille & France)	25
1992	Marco Van Basten (Milan & Holland)	19
1993	Roberto Baggio (Juventus & Italy)	14
1994	Paolo Maldini (Milan & Italy)	27
1995	Gianluca Vialli (Juventus & Italy)	18
1996	Ronaldo (Barcelona & Brazil)	17
1997	Ronaldo (Barcelona/Internazionale & Brazil)	27
1998	Zinedine Zidane (Juventus & France)	23
1999	Rivaldo (Barcelona & Brazil)	42
2000	Luis Figo (Barcelona/Real Madrid & Portugal)	26
2001	Michael Owen (Liverpool & England)	31
2002	Ronaldo (Internazionale/Real Madrid & Brazil)	26
2003	Pavel Nedved (Juventus & Czech Republic)	36
2004	Ronaldinho (Barcelona & Brazil)	29
2005	Ronaldinho (Barcelona & Brazil)	39
2006	Fabio Cannavaro (Juventus/Real Madrid & Italy)	40
2007	Kaka (Milan & Brazil)	52

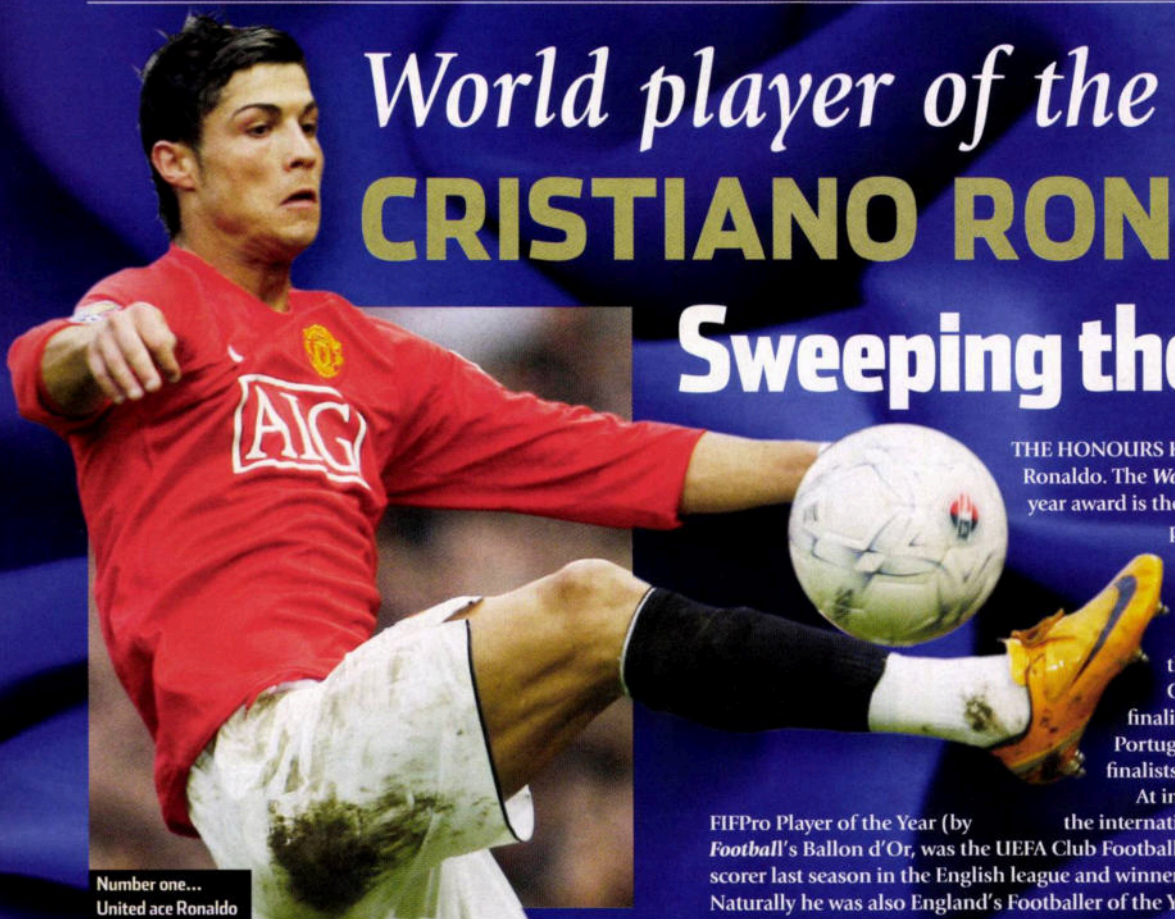
WORLD MANAGER		
1982	Enzo Bearzot (Italy)	49
1983	Sepp Piontek (Denmark)	29
1984	Michel Hidalgo (France)	30
1985	Terry Venables (Barcelona)	30
1986	Guy Thys (Belgium)	15
1987	Johan Cruyff (Ajax)	25
1988	Rinus Michels (Holland/Bayer Leverkusen)	48
1989	Arrigo Sacchi (Milan)	42
1990	Franz Beckenbauer (West Germany)	53
1991	Michel Platini (France)	42
1992	Richard Moller Nielsen (Denmark)	28
1993	Alex Ferguson (Manchester United)	21
1994	Carlos Alberto Parreira (Brazil)	17
1995	Louis Van Gaal (Ajax)	42
1996	Berti Vogts (Germany)	28
1997	Ottmar Hitzfeld (Borussia Dortmund)	17
1998	Arsene Wenger (Arsenal)	28
1999	Alex Ferguson (Manchester United)	60
2000	Dino Zoff (Italy)	18
2001	Gerard Houllier (Liverpool)	28
2002	Guus Hiddink (South Korea)	28
2003	Carlo Ancelotti (Milan)	20
2004	Jose Mourinho (FC Porto/Chelsea)	36
2005	Jose Mourinho (Chelsea)	34
2006	Marcello Lippi (Italy)	35
2007	Alex Ferguson (Manchester United)	26

WORLD TEAM					
1982	Brazil	30	1995	Ajax	50
1983	Hamburg	29	1996	Nigeria	31
1984	France	45	1997	Borussia Dortmund	20
1985	Everton	42	1998	France	35
1986	Argentina	15	1999	Manchester United	61
1987	FC Porto	38	2000	France	33
1988	Holland	43	2001	Liverpool	26
1989	Milan	51	2002	Brazil	24
1990	West Germany	28	2003	Milan	23
1991	France	20	2004	Greece	25
1992	Denmark	37	2005	Liverpool	27
1993	Parma	24	2006	Barcelona	42
1994	Milan	33	2007	Spain	22

YOUNG PLAYER		
2005	Robinho (Santos/Real Madrid & Brazil)	30
2006	Lionel Messi (Barcelona & Argentina)	36
2007	Lionel Messi (Barcelona & Argentina)	33

World player of the year CRISTIANO RONALDO

Sweeping the board



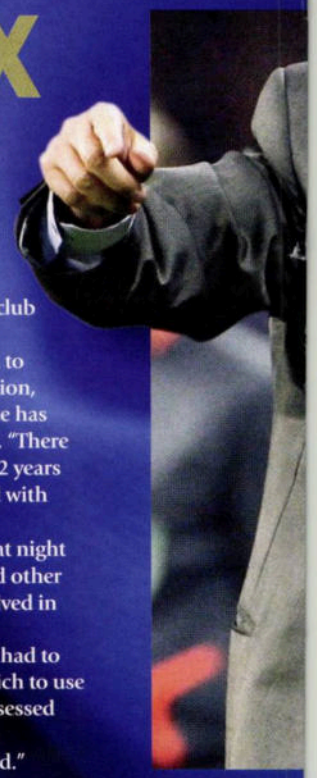
Number one... United ace Ronaldo

THE HONOURS KEEp rolling in for Cristiano Ronaldo. The ***World Soccer*** World player of the year award is the latest recognition of Ronaldo's phenomenal success and outstanding individual talent.

Thus far Ronaldo has won the Champions League (this year), two Premier League titles, the FA Cup once and the League Cup. He was a World Cup semi-finalist in 2006, a runner-up with Portugal at Euro 2004 and a quarter-finalists this year in Austria/Switzerland.

At individual level he has been named FIFPro Player of the Year (by the international players' union), won ***France Football***'s Ballon d'Or, was the UEFA Club Footballer of the Year and was both top scorer last season in the English league and winner of the European Golden Shoe. Naturally he was also England's Footballer of the Year.

World manager of the year ALEX FERGUSON



Driving force behind United

ALEX FERGUSON ADMITTED recently that he stood up Frank Sinatra because he was so annoyed at a poor performance by his Manchester United side.

"From my point of view, you can't beat Sinatra. I was actually supposed to have dinner with him one night, but we lost to Charlton so I cancelled it and went home. I wasn't in the mood to meet anybody that night, so I went back home on the bus."

That was back in 1989 when Ferguson had yet to establish United as the global force they are today, European champions for the third time last year and currently competing for the world club title in Japan.

In the interview, given to United's in-house TV station, Ferguson admitted that he has mellowed in recent times. "There was a period, maybe 10-12 years ago, when I was obsessed with everything," he said.

"I would come home at night and phone the scouts and other managers, but I was involved in everything at the club.

"Bit by bit, I realised I had to find other avenues in which to use my energy and not be obsessed with everything that was happening at Old Trafford."

World team of the year SPAIN

Trophy time...Spain captain Casillas leads the celebrations

Heroes in Vienna

SPAIN'S TRIUMPH AT Euro 2008 was a victory for the little guy. What the likes of Xavi, Cesc Fabregas David Villa, David Silva and Andres Iniesta lacked in physical stature, they made up for with technical brilliance.

Spain are a particularly worthy Team of the year because their triumph in Vienna owed as much to their collective talents as the outstanding contribution of any individual. Even UEFA president Michel Platini threw off his cloak of impartiality to praise the Spanish victory. "I must be neutral," he said. "But the team who played the best football won. Spain, with small, skilful players in midfield, reminded me of football as it used to be played. It was technical football, not physical football."

In previous tournaments, Spain's biggest opponents had always been themselves. But at Euro 2008, notably in Vienna during the quarter-final against Italy and the semi-final against Russia, Spain discovered a sense of belief and sense of purpose that enabled their outdoubted footballing talents to shine.

Young player of the year LIONEL MESSI

Still going strong...Ferguson

Barcelona's star turn

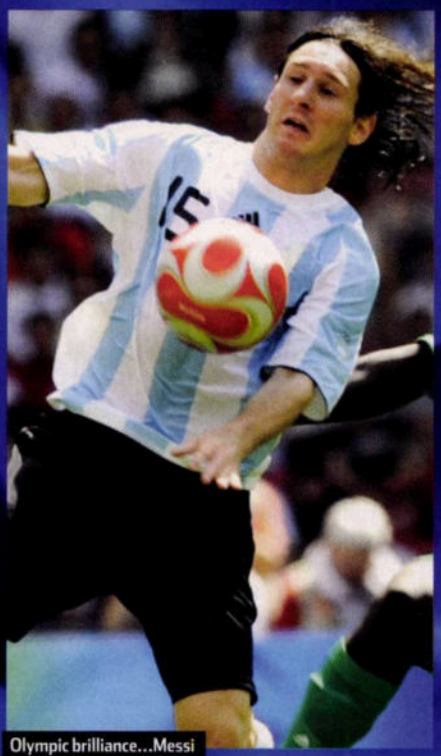
LIONEL MESSI ADMITTED recently that "it's time for an Argentinian" to win the world player award after many years of Brazilians success enjoyed by the likes of Kaka, Ronaldinho, Rivaldo and Ronaldo.

He was joking (we think) but behind the smiles lay an acknowledgement that big things are now expected of the little man from Rosario.

Messi originally wore the number 30 shirt at Barcelona – in homage, he claims, to numbers 10 (Ronaldinho) and 20 (Deco). He now wears the number 10 shirt, with all the complications that brings.

Messi's starring role at the 2008 Olympics – he was one of the few players to emerge from Beijing with their reputation enhanced – has added to the expectation.

For the past two seasons, Messi has played second fiddle to Kaka and Cristiano Ronaldo in the end-of-year awards. His time, though, will surely come.


Olympic brilliance...Messi

The year of living

Gavin Hamilton reflects on the past 12 months

HOW WILL 2008 be remembered? Certainly, as the year when Spain broke their international hoodoo, winning their first major tournament for 44 years and doing so in some style at Euro 2008. Egypt, too, reminded everybody of the strength of the north African game, despite almost universal predictions that the winner of the 2008 African Nations Cup would come from west Africa. And Argentina, inspired by Lionel Messi, provided a reminder that the Olympic Games football tournament is not an entirely fruitless exercise.

But it is a reflection of the shifting sands of the modern game that football's powerbrokers spent much of the year embroiled in matters related to club rather than country.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter led the howls of condemnation for the English Premier League's Game 39 plan. As 2008 progressed, UEFA president Michel Platini's calls for tighter regulation of club debts grew louder. Platini is right to highlight the bank-assisted financial strength of Europe's elite. But the situation is more complex than his analysis suggests.

Power is now concentrated in the hands of a small group of superclubs – European football's very own oligarchs, if you like. Their influence has been acquired through various means: wealthy owners, the acquisition of debt and, indeed, regular participation in UEFA's Champions League.

In Platini's homeland, Lyon have now won an astonishing seven successive league titles. Elsewhere, Internazionale retained their Italian crown and Real Madrid won a second successive Spanish Liga. PSV's Dutch league victory was their seventh success in nine years while FC Porto celebrated their fifth Portuguese championship in six years. There were different names on the league trophy in England and Germany, though. Step forward, Manchester United and Bayern Munich.

Surprises in store

But football continues to produce some surprises – witness the emergence of Hoffenheim in Germany, Hull City in England and Leixoes in Portugal, and the (relative) success of CFR Cluj and Anorthosis Famagusta in the Champions League group stages.

But after the first all-English Champions League Final in Moscow, what price all four English teams reaching the semi-finals of the Champions League in 2009? Only the luck of the draw is preventing that total domination.

And the global financial crisis could yet force clubs under. The beautiful game is now also a dangerous game for those investors who came late to football in search of a fast buck.

In South America, financial pressures of a different kind have kept the continent's leading club competition, the Libertadores Cup, open to a wider range of challengers. Few would have predicted the success of Ecuador's LDU Quito at the start of year. And at the beginning of 2008, who would have predicted that Manchester City would be, on paper at least, the world's richest club?

The year ended with scandal unfolding in Spain and a reminder that football cannot ignore the threat of match-fixing. It is an issue to which we will no doubt return in 2009.

dangerously

NEW FACES

Euro stars...Spain lift the European Championship trophy after a 1-0 win over Germany in Vienna thanks to a goal from Fernando Torres (left)

Russian revelation...Arshavin

Atletico ace...Aguero

Brazilian talent...Pato

SERGIO AGUERO

Maradona's son-in-law shone for Atletico Madrid and provided a reminder that Argentina continues to produce wonderful talent.

ANDREI ARSHAVIN

The star of Zenit St Petersburg's UEFA Cup triumph sparkled briefly for Russia at Euro 2008.

ALEXANDRE PATO

Excelled in first season for Milan and scored a brilliant goal on his Brazil debut.

MOHAMED ABOUTRIKA

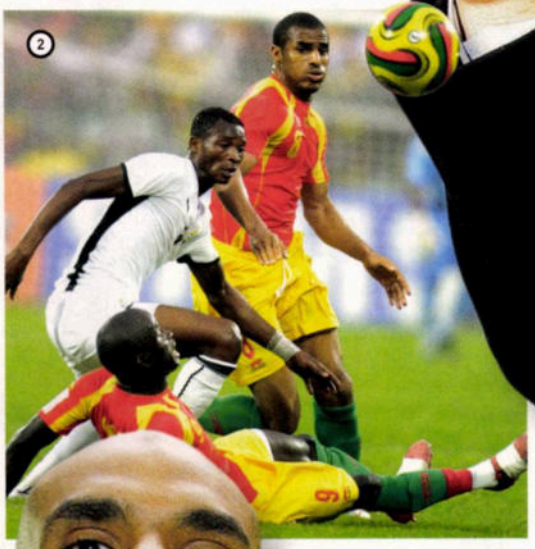
Not a newcomer but one of the stars of Egypt's Nations Cup triumph and ignored by Europe for too long.

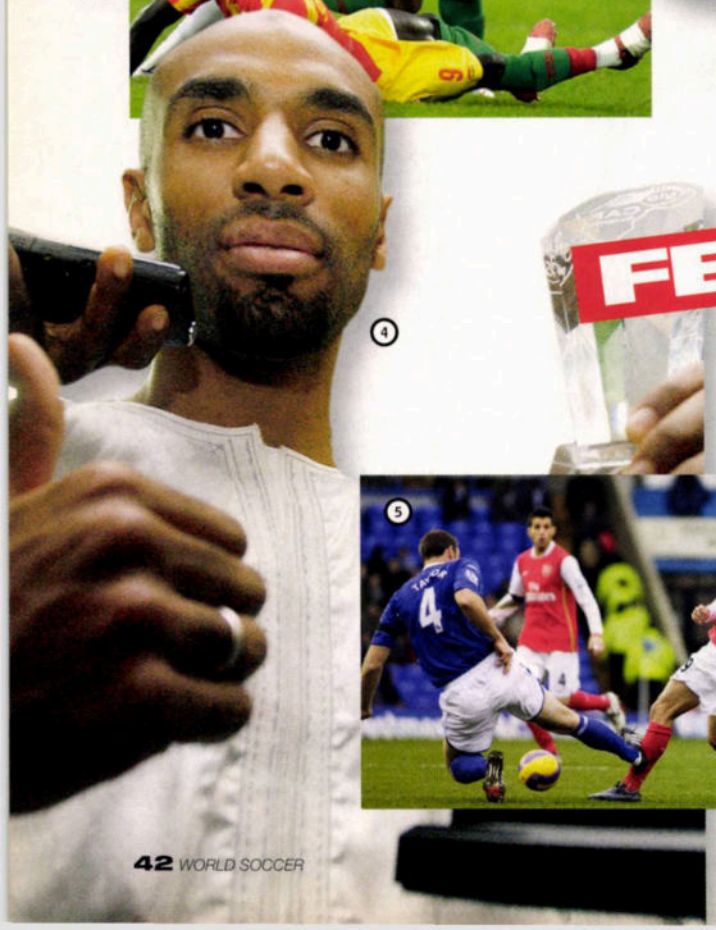
Egypt star...Aboutrika

WorldSoccer REVIEW 2008

JANUARY

Newcastle re-appoint Kevin Keegan as manager (1)... The 26th African Nations Cup kicks off in Ghana (2)... Fabio Capello starts work as England coach (3)... In the January transfer window, Valencia sign Argentinian midfielder Ever Banega from Boca Juniors, Chelsea sign Nicolas Anelka from Bolton and Argentinian teenager Franco Di Santo from Audax Italiano, Nery Castillo joins Man City from Shakhtar Donetsk, Brazilian teenage defender Breno moves to Bayern Munich, Momo Sissoko joins Juventus from Liverpool, who sign Martin Skrtel from Zenit St Petersburg, and Parma bring back Cristiano Lucarelli to Italy from Shakhtar Donetsk.



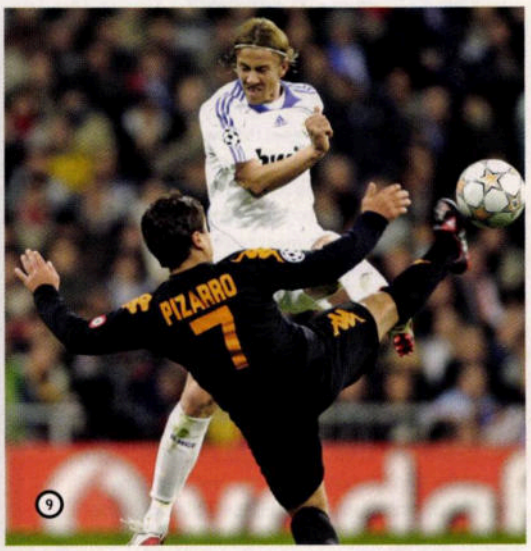


FEBRUARY

Mali's Freddie Kanoute is a controversial choice as African Player of the Year after Ivory Coast striker Didier Drogba refuses to attend the ceremony (4)... Arsenal's Croatian striker Eduardo is ruled out of Euro 2008 after an horrific ankle fracture (5)... Egypt retain the African Nations Cup beating Cameroon 1-0 in the Final (6)... The English Premier League's proposal for a 'Game 39', to be played abroad, attracts widespread condemnation... The G-14 group of European 'superclubs' officially dispands... The Republic of Ireland appoint Giovanni Trapattoni as national coach... Brazilian striker Ronaldo faces a battle to play again professionally after suffering another serious knee injury... Ajax approach Johan Cruyff to become their new technical director.

MARCH

Violence in Italy continues when a Parma fan is killed by Juventus fans at a motorway service station (7)... Iran appoint former player Ali Daei as national coach... Milan and Real Madrid exit Champions League at the first knockout stage, losing to Arsenal (8) and Roma (9) respectively... Johan Cruyff turns down Ajax following the announcement of Holland boss Marco Van Basten as their new head coach... Holger Osieck is sacked by J.League champions Urawa Red Diamonds just two games into the new season... Hugo Sanchez steps down as Mexico coach after the failure to qualify for the Olympics... Jose Antonio Camacho is sacked as coach of Benfica.



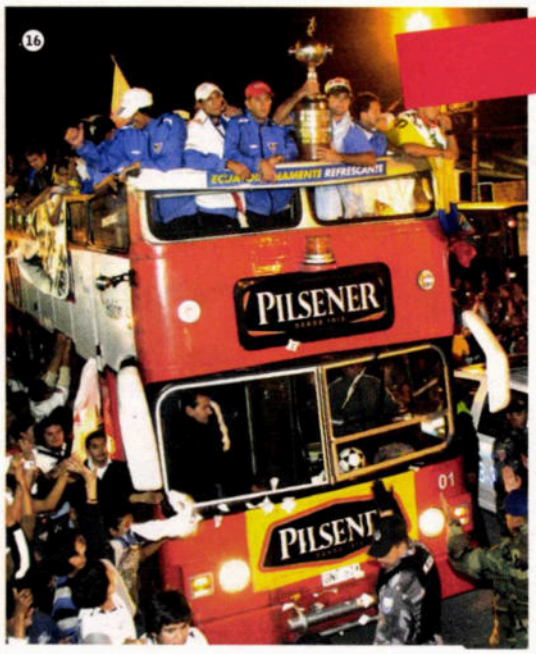
APRIL

Carlos Alberto Parreira quits as coach of 2010 World Cup hosts South Africa for family reasons... Romario announces his retirement at the age of 42... The court case against former executive of the bankrupt marketing company ISL opens in Zug... Chelsea reach their first Champions League Final after beating Liverpool in a tight semi-final (10)... Zenit St Petersburg thrash Bayern in a controversial UEFA Cup semi-final which, it is later alleged by a crusading Spanish judge, the Russian mafia tried to fix (11)... Mexico's Pachuca beat Deportivo Saprissa of Costa Rica to win the CONCACAF Champions Cup (12).

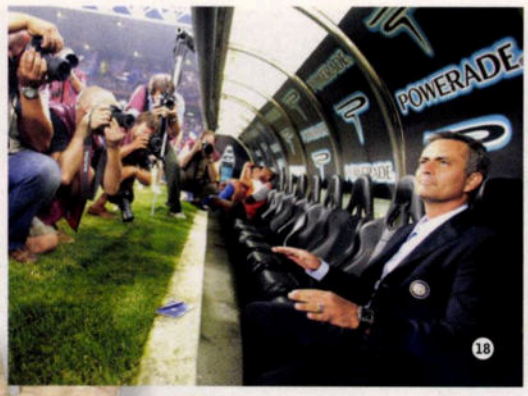
MAY

There are familiar names at the top of Europe's leading leagues as Internazionale, Lyon, Real Madrid, PSV and FC Porto retain their titles, while Manchester United and Bayern Munich win in England and Germany respectively. There new winners in Belgium, where Standard Liege win their first league title for more than 20 years... Oliver Kahn plays his last league game for Bayern Munich, while Benfica's Rui Costa also announces his retirement (13)... Manchester United beat Chelsea in the first all-English Champions League Final in Moscow (14)... Zenit St Petersburg win the UEFA Cup, beating Rangers 2-0 at the City of Manchester stadium (15)... at the FIFA Congress in Sydney, president Sepp Blatter seeks approval for his '6+5' plan for home-grown players... UEFA president Michel Platini speaks out against English clubs in debt.

JUNE



The month is dominated by Euro 2008... Spain beat Germany in the Final to finally win a major title; Holland, who beat France and Italy in the group stages, play some of the best football, along with Russia, who have a new star in Andrei Arshavin; Italy, missing the injured Fabio Cannavaro, rely too heavily on misfiring striker Luca Toni and go out on penalties to Spain in the quarter-finals, the moment Spain started to believe they could win... Elsewhere in the world, Mexico appoint Sven Goran Eriksson as new coach... LDU Quito of Ecuador win the Libertadores Cup, beating Brazil's Fluminense on penalties in the Final (16)... River Plate win the Argentinian closing championship (17).



There are new club coaches at some of Europe's biggest clubs: Luiz Felipe Scolari takes over at Chelsea, Jurgen Klinsmann at Bayern Munich, Josep Guardiola at Barcelona, Jose Mourinho at Internazionale (18), Marco Van Basten at Ajax... Sepp Blatter provokes a major row when he compares Cristiano Ronaldo's contract situation at Manchester United to "modern slavery"... After Euro 2008, there's a major changing of the guard: Karel Bruckner leaves Czech Republic to take charge of Austria; Luis Aragones leaves Spain to coach Fenerbahce (19) and is replaced by Vicente Del Bosque; Bert Van Marwijk replaces Van Basten at Holland; Marcello Lippi is back as Italy coach after the resignation of Roberto Donadoni; Ottmar Hitzfeld takes over as Switzerland coach; Carlos Queiroz is the new boss of Portugal... But Raymond Domenech stays on as France coach, despite strong opposition from the media and French public (20); also carrying on are Croatia's Slaven Bilic, Russia's Guus Hiddink and Germany's Joachim Low.

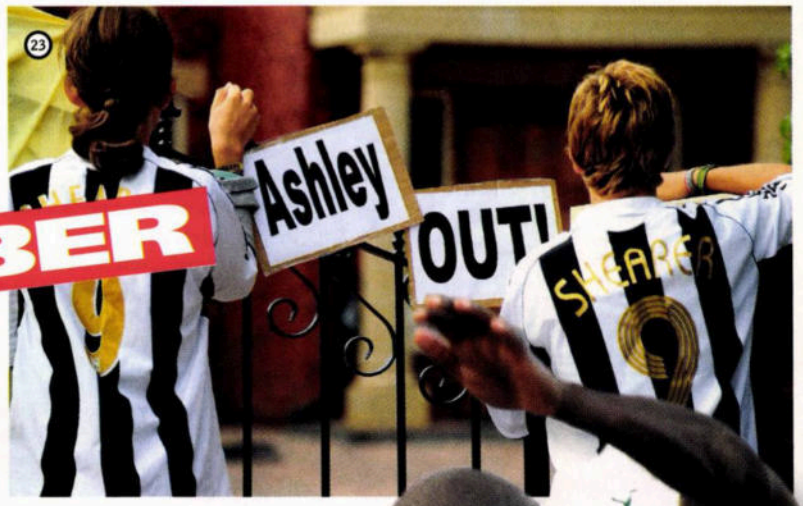
JULY

AUGUST

In the build-up to the football tournament at the Beijing Olympics, there is a major row over player availability, but clubs eventually back down; Argentina, inspired by Lionel Messi, win the gold medal, having beaten favourites Brazil, and there are also strong performances by Nigeria and Belgium... Ruud Gullit leaves LA Galaxy... In the summer transfer market, Ronaldinho leaves Barcelona for Milan (21), Real Madrid sign Rafael Van der Vaart, Euro 2008 stars Luka Modric and Roman Pavlyuchenko join Spurs... Manchester City are bought by the Abu Dhabi United Group, potentially making them the world's richest club (22)... The arrival of Robinho at City from Real Madrid strengthens the influence of Brazilian players in the Premier League.

Kevin Keegan quits Newcastle after a breakdown in relations with owner Mike Ashley (23)... Brazilian coach Zico joins compatriot Rivaldo at ambitious Uzbekistan club Bunyodkor (24)... Romanian champions CFR Cluj (25) and Anorthosis Famagusta are the surprise qualifiers for the Champions League group stages... UEFA Congress approves a plan for the expansion of the European Championships to 24 teams, as well as the rebranding of the UEFA Cup as the Europa League.

SEPTEMBER

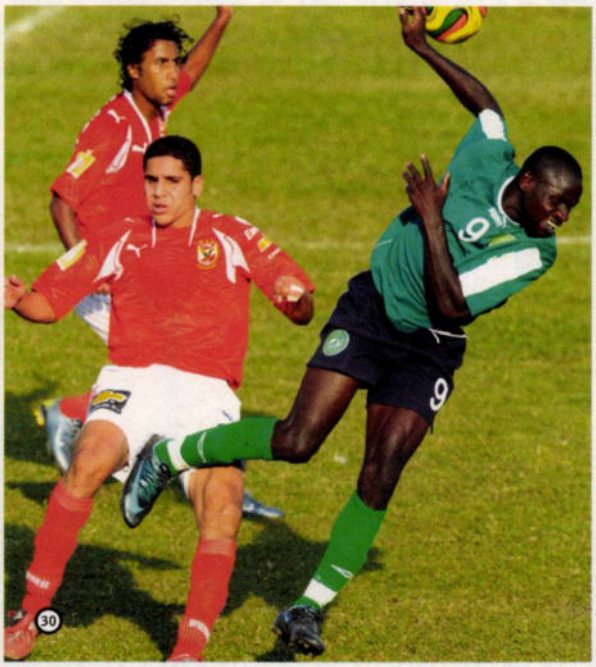


OCTOBER

In the World Cup qualifiers, Brazil (26) and Argentina struggle, while South Africa and Senegal (27) miss out on the final stage of the African qualifiers... Diego Maradona is appointed Argentina coach following the resignation of Alfio Basile (29)... Poland's hosting of Euro 2012 is called into question after the Polish FA is threatened with international suspension by FIFA, who are angry at Polish government interference in the FA.

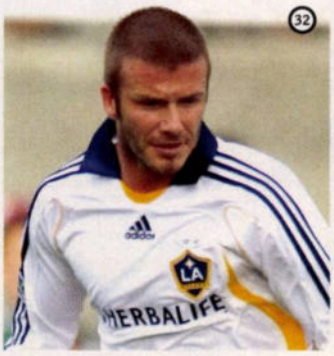
NOVEMBER

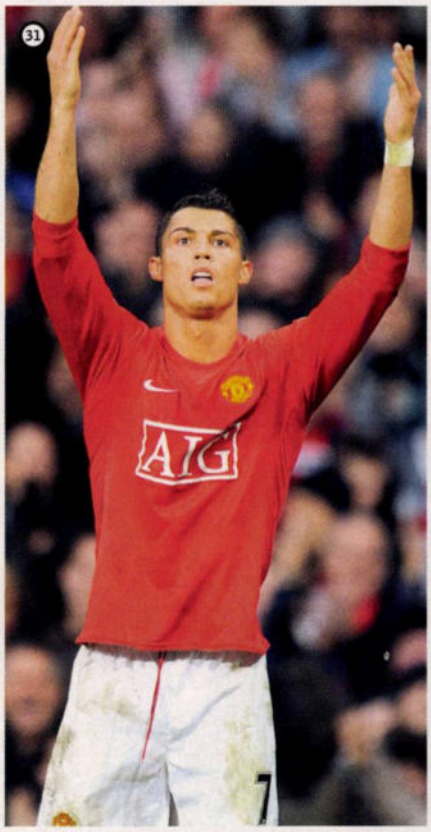
Japan's Gamba Osaka win the Asian Champions League for the first time, beating Adelaide United of Australia in convincing style (29)... Egypt's Al Ahly win the African Champions League (30) for the third time in four years.



DECEMBER

Cristiano Ronaldo is hailed as the world's best player (31)... Manchester United are the overwhelming favourites to win the Club World Cup in Japan... Surprise teams lead the way in a number of European leagues, including Hoffenheim in Germany and Leixoes in Portugal... David Beckham and Landon Donovan are scheduled to move to European clubs for loan spells during the MLS close season (32)... French government ministers, with the encouragement of Michel Platini, try to persuade their European counterparts to accept tougher policing of club finances.





R.I.P.

- ANTON 'TONI' ALLEMANN, former Swiss international, 72
- FONS BASTIJNS, former Club Brugge player, 61
- GORDON BRADLEY, former US coach, 74
- VALENTIN BUBUKIN, USSR European champion in 1960, 75
- TOMMY BURNS, former Celtic manager, 52
- CHARLIE DEMPSEY, former Oceania president, 87
- DEREK DOOLEY, Sheffield-born player and manager, 78
- REGIS GENAUX, former Belgian international, 35,
- LOUIS HON, former France international and coach, 83
- RUDOLF ILLOVSZKY, former Hungarian national coach, 86
- GEZA KALOCSAY, former Hungarian/Czech international/coach, 95
- HEINRICH 'HEINZ' KWIATKOWSKI, German 1954 World Cup winner, 84
- JACOB 'BOBO' LEKGETHO, South African international, 34
- PEDRO POMPILIO, Boca Juniors president, 55
- ABRAM RASELEMANE, South African international, 30
- EMMANUEL 'MANNO' SANON, leading member of Haiti's 1974 World Cup squad, 56
- LUIS SANTIBANEZ, former Chile national coach, 72
- FRANCO SENSI, Roma president, 82
- JIMMY SIRREL, English manager, 86
- MATHIEU SPRENGERS, Dutch FA president/UEFA executive member, 69
- FRANCOIS STERCHELE, Belgian striker, 26
- DEREK TAPSCOTT, former Welsh international, 75
- GUY TCHINGOMA, Gabon international, 22
- JOHNNY THIO, former Belgian international and coach, 73
- CONSTANT VANDEN STOCK, former Anderlecht owner, 93
- GIOVANNI VIOLA, former Italy goalkeeper, 82
- VICTOR WEGRIA, former Belgian international, 71

The clock

Keir Radnedge reports from Johannesburg on the Confederations Cup draw and preparations for the 2010 World Cup finals

SOUTH AFRICA will be ready for the World Cup in 2010 and, as much as is necessary, will be ready for the Confederations Cup next year. How South Africa will cope is, of course, another matter entirely.

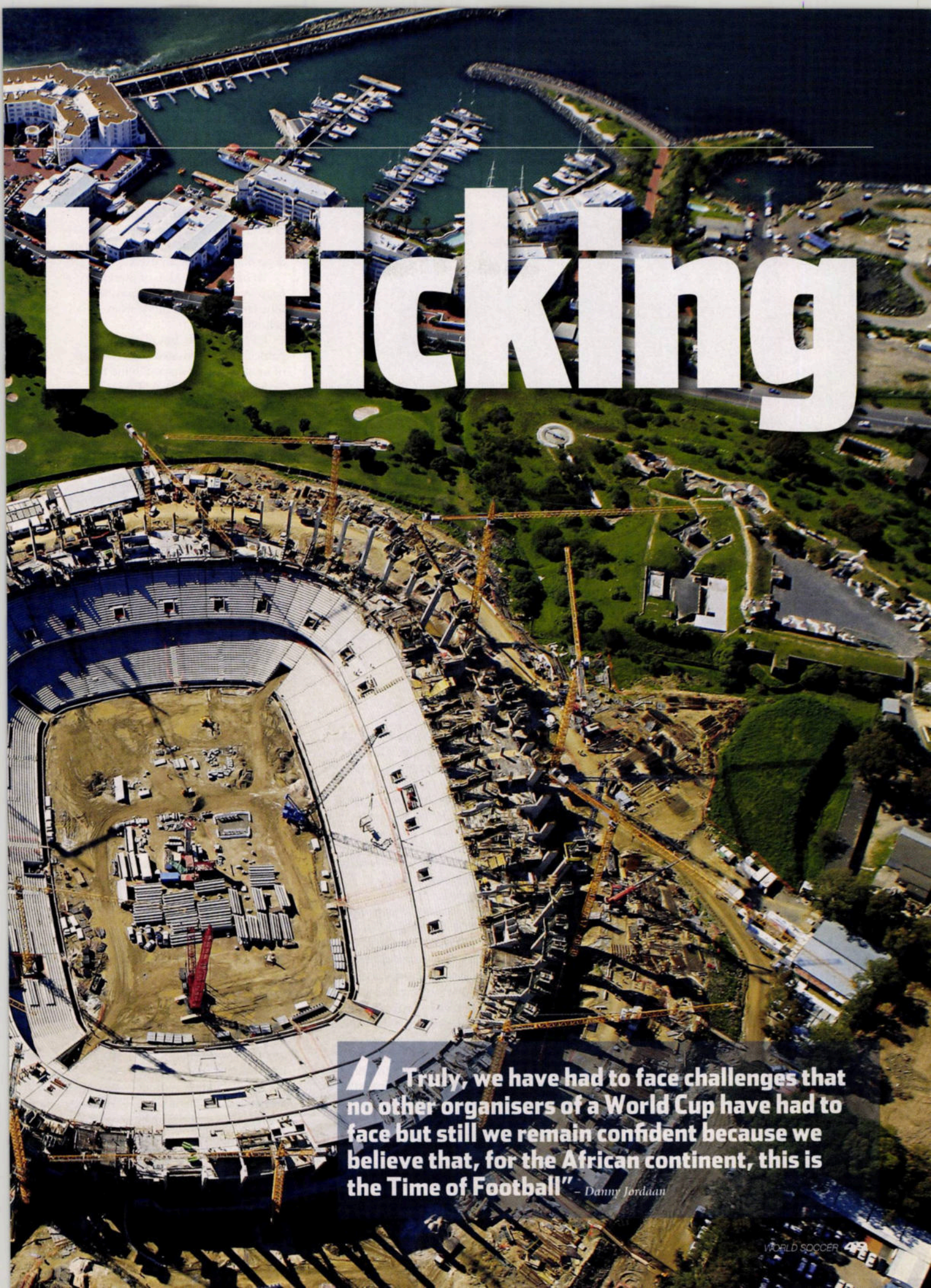
Danny Jordaan promises "the greatest World Cup ever". He has no option. As chief executive of the organising committee he has no option but to parrot the line uttered by all local chieftans since, one assumes, Admiral Vaccaro in Italy in 1934 (The Uruguayans in that long-ago previous, inaugural 1930 had needed no such boast, of course).

Since Jordaan has – and has had – to steer his World Cup ship through a complex diplomatic, administrative and political minefield, we can absolve him of the sin of hyperbole.

The truth, as he knows possibly with a sense of prospective relief, is that once the football starts all the flame and fuss over stadium construction, transport projects, hotel prices and even ticketing allocations are firmly dumped in the dustbin of media history by the onset of what the World Cup is really all about – the football.

Confidence that the Rainbow nation will be ready is evinced by one man with more expertise than any other. Horst R Schmidt is the self-effacing former general secretary of the German federation who has organised two World Cups himself (1974 and 2006) and was sent to Johannesburg by FIFA

Slowly but surely...the new World Cup stadium at Green Point, Cape Town, takes shape



is ticking

"Truly, we have had to face challenges that no other organisers of a World Cup have had to face but still we remain confident because we believe that, for the African continent, this is the Time of Football" – *Danny Jordaan*

SECURITY

At the charge...South African police go through a mock exercise

CRIME STILL A MAJOR ISSUE

South Africa must make good its promises on personal welfare

OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA, the issue raising most concern and most scaremongering headlines is personal security.

Crime statistics and stories severely compromise one of the South Africa Tourism blurbs that "the 2010 FIFA World Cup will be this country's biggest success story since our first democratic election in 1994".

This World Cup reference is intended to encompass not only the matches but also the fan zones and the visitor potential encapsulated in an image of a Kruger Park-themed country as epitomised in Sun City which might be described as "Las Vegas meets The Jungle" (But high rollers beware: the Palace Hotel does not have 24-hour internet connection).

Organising leader Danny Jordaan says: "The central issue underpinning the World Cup is that it must be safe and secure. Everyone coming here must have a safe, secure time so that they will want to return.

"Manchester United, Barcelona, Milan and so on have all come here without a single incident. This is our track record. We will know when the teams and the fans will arrive, where they will stay and where they be at any given time.

"If we can secure 1.2million tourists in December, which is the major tourism period, why can we not keep 450,000 secure during the World Cup?" A 24/7 network of "World Cup courts" is being created. Any troublemakers arrested in or around one of the stadia will be taken to the nearest designated police station, held in separate cells from "ordinary" criminals and confronted by specially-assigned prosecutors.

Susan Shabangu, Deputy Minister for Safety and Security, is one of those who will carry the can if a seven-phase security plan implodes into a criminality nightmare.

Yet crime, she says, has been falling by an annual rate of seven per cent over the past four years.

Shabangu adds: "What we are really facing is a challenge of perception. We need to communicate our progress effectively while we review some of the laws we have to make sure they become much stiffer.

"We are looking at how best we can teach the members of our police service to be better officers. Also, some of the most heinous crimes happen within our local communities and we need those communities to assist fighting crime in this country.

"We want everyone who comes to South Africa to be able to feel safe and free. We are confident that, in the next two years, we will be better than where we are today when it comes to dealing with crime in our country."

Time – and the statistics – will tell.

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

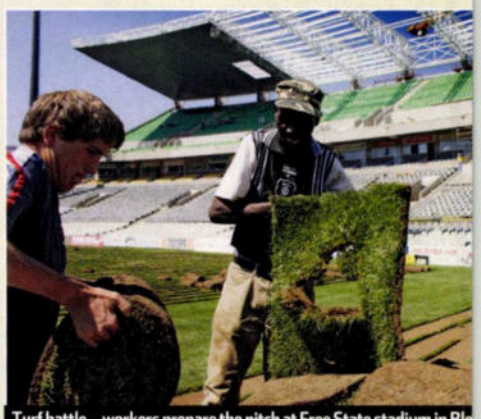
two years ago as "consultant" to the organising committee.

Schmidt is not based in the impressive new SAFA headquarters merely to relay happy messages back to Zurich: his real task is to oversee the entire project. Anything wrong, anything out of step, and the danger is that Zurich will know and the wrath of Sepp Blatter will be aroused.

To be fair, the vision of president Sepp as an avenging angel may be a little far-fetched, but this is what Schmidt is about.

FIFA in general, but Blatter in particular, have invested huge amounts of money, manpower and blind faith in delivering a first World Cup to Africa and nothing must go wrong in lead-up, delivery or execution.

Schmidt says: "South Africa's readiness at this stage of preparations compares easily with other past hosts. The most important factor is the infrastructure. With two years to go I know people around the world had doubts about whether South Africa


Turf battle...workers prepare the pitch at Free State stadium in Blo

could deliver 10 quality venues and do it in time. But the work has made enormous progress and with great quality because of the excellence of the planning. They can deliver in terms both of quality and on time.

"If there are cost overruns then I have to say that, on delivery issues, this is quite normal in preparing for a World Cup in a fluctuating financial context. But there is no danger that South Africa cannot deliver both the Confederations and World Cups."

Project South Africa is different to all other World Cups and not merely by the accident of geography.

This is a nation running away from a divisive and hateful past and seeking to built a new society on an economic fast track. Millions are being spent on urban highway creation, selective airport redevelopment and an ambitious regional passenger transit system in and around Johannesburg.

The latter concept, the Gautrain, is

essential to help override the traffic congestion which would wreck all those happy dreams of the great occasions ahead at the out-of-town Soccer City complex which will host the 2010 World Cup Final.

A year ago I saw a naked concrete bowl – now Soccer City is getting dressed. The Austrian-developed outer cladding of the calabash, the clay pot, stadium is being applied; the Italian-honed roof panels which have been stitched in Bangkok are being hauled into place; the floor plan for the operation of the nearby International Broadcast Centre has been laid down.

Elsewhere work is reasonably close to target though "delivery" of the stadia now appears to mean "delivery without frills and fittings" rather than in entirety.

Port Elizabeth – 'PE' in World Cup 2010 argot – was struck from the Confederations Cup agenda after construction delays and controversy in Cape Town continues to surround the new Green Point stadium.Whether it was needed, in the first place, to supplant Newlands is an argument lost. The question now is who pays for the upgrading FIFA is demanding beyond the original specifications?

Organising chairman Irving Khoza did concede that Cape Town faces a particular challenge on environmental issues concerning noise and wind as well as the stadium's lighting system and has been promised by FIFA general secretary Jerome Valcke that extra costs will be discussed "in good faith".

FIFA, frankly, has no option but to pay and is being increasingly squeezed. As the project leader in one other venue told me: "At first we accepted everything from the great god in Zurich. But not any more. Now, we have learned to say No to FIFA."

The first test of both South Africa's ability to meet the construction and overall deadlines comes next June with the eight-team Confederations Cup.

Suddenly, time is starting to run away with the project. Valcke, on a fact-finding mission of his own for FIFA in November, realised as much, almost with a sense of shock.

He says: "Suddenly we find ourselves just six months away from Confederations Cup and 18 months from the World Cup itself. So now the preparation time is almost over and we are entering into the implementation and delivery phase of these two events.

"We are working closely with the local organising committee and the government – the current one and the next one to follow the forthcoming elections – so I can say we are ready.

"The Confederations Cup is a test event but an important event also

TRANSPORT

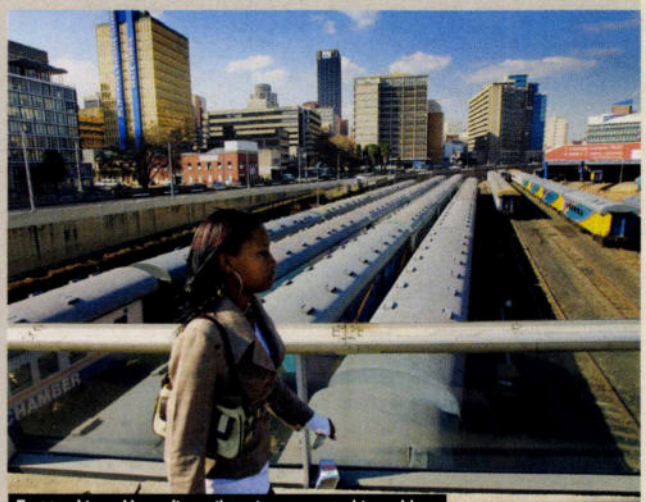
AMBITIOUS PLANS LACK SUBSTANCE

Minister's vision for trains, planes and roads is at odds with reality

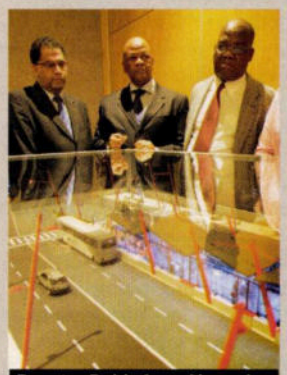
MORE problematic perhaps, even than security for the success of the 2010 World Cup is the thorny issue of transport.

South Africa's transport infrastructure was developed regionally and not nationally to suit the daily employment demands of the cities and their townships under apartheid.

The country does not possess the high-speed intercity rail links to which World Cup visitors grew accustomed in France 1998, Japan 2002 and Germany 2006, nor the flightpaths accessible in the United States in 1994, nor the bus schedules awaiting in South Korea in 2002.



Fast tracking...Upgrading rail services present a big problem



Bus pain...Radebe (centre) hears plans

A transport briefing prepared for the FIFA general secretary Jerome Valcke presented a vision of travel in 2010 which was so incredibly Utopian it left locally-based journalists scratching their heads and wondering if they lived in the same country.

Transport Minister Jeff Radebe and director-general Mpumi Mpofu paint a wondrous picture of how, within 18 months, a £13 billion investment will have fashioned a revolution in new highways, airport reconstruction serving many more foreign airlines plus new rail, bus and upgraded taxi/minibus services.

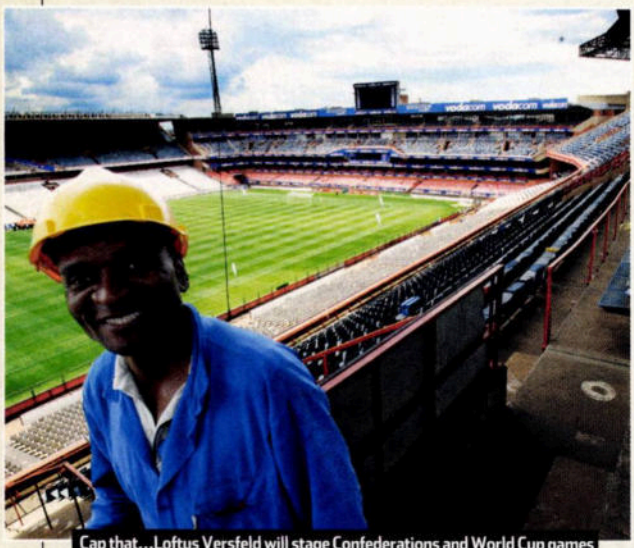
Mpofu has an impressive and aggressive command of her brief. She appears to have fed all the relevant information on fans, match schedules and transport timetables into a giant computer which, she believes, can predict the hour-by-hour, day-by-day, week-by-week comings and goings of the entire supporters' cavalcade.

"Everyone will be catered for," says Radebe. "This is not investment to please FIFA but a lasting legacy for our country."

Radebe then spoiled the effect by adding: "I, myself, travelled by train safely from Johannesburg to Bloemfontein..." – as if this proved that thousands of fans can enjoy, simultaneously, the same service as an escorted and bodyguarded government minister.

Taxi rank...the country will need a cab overhaul to deal with fans' demands

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums


Cap that...Loftus Versfeld will stage Confederations and World Cup games

because we will have the best teams in the world and it will give us a chance to check the structures and all the people from all sides, locally and from FIFA. That will give us a road map of where we have to improve and what we may have to change."

The Cup will also provide a first challenge for the security strategy developed by the charismatic police commissioner Andre Pruis.

This will, in some ways, be a misleading test because foreign fans will not turn up in the droves expected – credit crunch permitting – a year later. The Confederations Cup will be a local event in crowd terms; indeed, it will be such a local event that Jordaan and his team are concerned that South African supporters will not turn out in the required numbers for all the matches and that television will show an embarrassing number of empty seats around the world.

Pruis, of course, is not concerned about that. His priority is dealing with the consequences of the fan influx which will engulf South Africa in 2010. At least, to his satisfaction, the government has not stinted in handing him the necessary money and increased manpower.

He says: "We have 175,420 police service members and will have around 200,000 by 2010 plus a reserve of 70,000 who can always be called on. We will also have 400 new mobile camera systems to assist with our command and control strategy.

"Another advantage we have is that, ahead of an event, you know a number of factors about places which can be flashpoints such as airports, rail stations, hotels and stadia."

Pruis will rely on significant levels of help and support from the police forces of the competing World Cup finalists. He says: "We would like officers from those forces to deploy with our members and move around with their respective teams. A specific officer knows the 'vibe' of his fans. For instance, I may look at the situation and think it could be a serious problem whereas he will know it is really nothing to worry about.

"Then there are language issues and also, laws are different in different countries. One country may allow something we do not like."

The man, however, to whom Schmidt and Pruis and the rest must give way in terms of work on behalf of the cause is Jordaan himself. He led the effort to bring the finals to the Republic and events in June and July of 2010 will fulfil, for him, a vision for his nation which stretches beyond "mere" football.

Jordaan says: "This World Cup is not only about stadium issues. It's about swimming pools, grass, trees, water – improving the lives of our people.

"The hope and dream of this World Cup was born at FIFA Congress in Chicago in 1994. The big issue then was the increase in the number of teams at the finals from 24 to 32.

"When the people of the United States recently looked for hope and change they looked to Chicago and this spirit is one we have tried to catch in rebuilding relations in this country.

"Football has become more than just a ball game. We saw that recently when Sepp Blatter went to Palestine for the game between Palestine and Jordan and not a shot was fired that day.

"That is the power of football and, in South Africa, we are seeking to use that power to re-engage with the world."

"We are in a period of transition as we approach this World Cup at a time of great global uncertainty. Will it mean no more travelling fans? This is just one more challenge at a time when we have been expecting to welcome 450,000 guests in 2010" – *Danny Jordaan*

JOHANNESBURG SIDELINES

Home help...Santana

Luck of the draw for Santana

JOEL SANTANA, Brazilian coach of South Africa, will hope he has as much luck in the World Cup itself as he was gifted in the Miss World-assisted draw for next summer's Confederations Cup.

Bafana Bafana were handed the easiest-possible task of tangling with Iraq, New Zealand and Spain in Group A. Unbalanced? Very. Group B brings together the United States, World Cup-holders Italy, five-times world champions Brazil and African champions Egypt.

In the shadow of the draw in Johannesburg, FIFA also carried out the draw for the final round of CONCACAF World Cup qualifiers. It must have set a record, taking just 3min 35sec. All credit here to the master of ceremonies, quick-on-the-draw Jim Brown, FIFA's competitions director.

Responsibility...Blatter and South Africa's ex-president T

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

That's no way to behave

BRAZIL AND ITALY are great football nations but disgracefully, despicably bad-mannered with it.

The five and four-times World Cup holders were the only two nations whose national coaches were absent from the Confederations Cup draw.

FIFA could offer no valid reason why both Dunga and Marcello Lippi snubbed the hosts of the first African World Cup.

Did they have more important things to do back home?

Did they consider South Africa a second-class football nation and not worth a weekend's effort?

Did they consider the Confederations Cup a tatty little piece of nonsense unworthy of their Armani-suited attention?

Did they have significant and excusable family crises?

Or did they not understand that being national coach requires not merely a lucrative contract but fulfilling the "national" responsibility which accompanies the job title, like it or not?

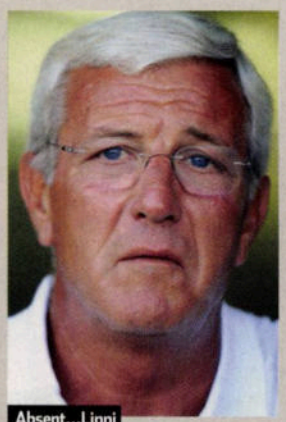
The tatty Italians sent along their usual apologist in the person of coaching aide Narciso Pezzotti who offered the incredulously lame: "Mr Lippi had an important meeting."

Even worse, the Brazilians, whose president Ricardo Teixeira sits in five-star luxury on the FIFA executive committee, did not even deign to send along an assistant physio.

Yet, in four years' time, the Brazilians will want all the rest of the world to come fawning to them ahead of their own staging of the Confederations Cup.

Frankly, if Italy and Brazil can't pay minimum respect to South Africa then their federation leaders deserve a good kicking in the committee room.

To be fair, FIFA president Sepp Blatter was not at the draw either. But at least he had a football excuse... attending the Women's Under-20s in Chile.



Absent...Lippi

No African solution

A WORD OF ADVICE for Sepp Blatter – he should henceforth ban any and every employee of the world federation and the 2010 World Cup organising operation from using the phrase: "This is an African solution."

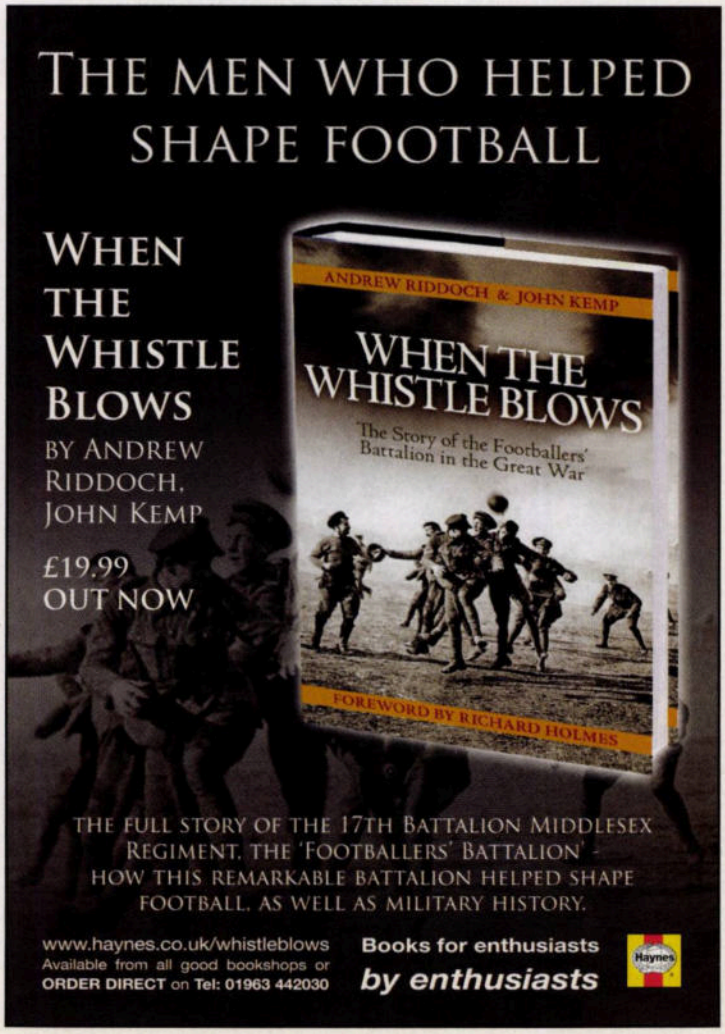
A year ago at the qualifying draw in Durban and again at the recent Confederations Cup draw in Johannesburg, the phrase was trotted out time and again to explain away potential administrative inadequacies.

I was told repeatedly: "It's no good expecting the same standards [of whatever] you had in America or France or Japan or Germany. This is an African solution."

Sorry. That will not do. The World Cup is owned, controlled, run, administered and financed by FIFA not the host nation. Each World Cup should be an organisational improvement on the last. That is FIFA's job.

If a country is not up to the job, FIFA must take the World Cup somewhere else or take all the blame, not seek to pass the buck.

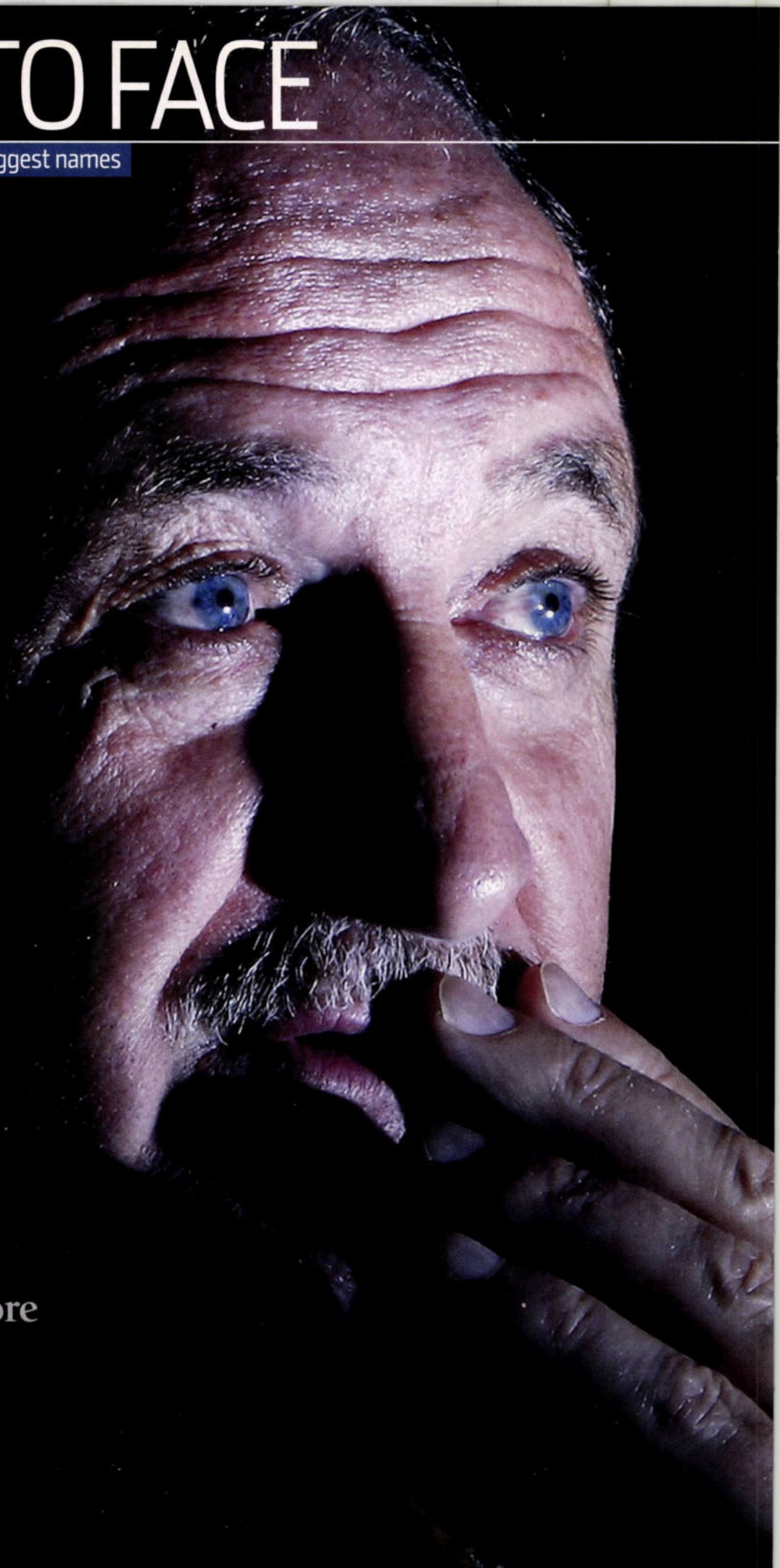
Keir Radnedge



FACE TO FACE

Interviews with football's biggest names

Scolari



"Chelsea are playing a more open, closer football. The team seems more 'Brazilianised'"

Style guru

Chelsea's manager explains how he has changed his team's way of playing

MANY people thought it would be difficult for you at Chelsea because you had never coached another club in Europe before? Has is been easier than you expected?
That's not a big deal – there is not much difference from when I was coach in Brazil. I have always been a club coach and had not coached a national team before 1991 in Kuwait. I was there only for a short time and then I was national coach with Brazil and Portugal. But I know the club game very well because I worked for 20 years as a coach in Brazil. And clubs in Brazil, in Saudi Arabia, in Africa or any other country, are the same.

You already said all competitions are important but if you had only one choice, which one would go for: The Premier League or the Champions League?
I don't have this choice. I have to think we want to win all the competitions. My players need to think they can win all competitions and dedicate themselves to do that, focusing their minds for the game that they are playing and not thinking about the other competitions. We have to try to get as far we can in all of them.

How do you see the rise of Hull City?
I have been following the rise of Hull City, who was in the third division 10 years ago. They bought some good players and have a good team. After they won their first games, confidence was high. I don't think they will finish at the top but I predict they will end the season fighting from fourth to eight place in the Premier League.

And what about Liverpool and Arsenal and Manchester United – especially with their long-serving managers?
They know English football very well, more than me and they know the clubs. It is important the support I receive from my assistant Ray Wilkins. He helps me sometimes with information about names, about stadiums, about people, about the history for the clubs, about the history of the players. Maybe in three or four months, I will know very well all the players in England. But that's in the future. The managers of Liverpool, Arsenal and Man United are here for many years – more than 20 in the case of Alex Ferguson – but I learn everyday about English football and I want to win in England. If I want to win, maybe in the future I will be better.

You must agree that, so far, you are learning really quickly?
Maybe...

How do you compare Brazilian players you have coached with England internationals at Chelsea, especially John Terry?
Some have John Terry's spirit but many players sometimes worry too much about being professionals and preserving themselves a lot instead or giving it all to the club, or do their jobs but only up to a limit. John Terry is different and some players at Chelsea are different. Even with pain or another problem that disturbs them, they play, they train, they are professional in a way I have rarely seen in other places. So, that's the main difference. John Terry is an example as a captain in the same way I always enjoyed being a player. I was captain in teams I played for 16 years in that mould, in that style. I would give it all to my team-mates and to my clubs and at the same time I would also impose some conditions – and that's John Terry. I think that's why Capello chose him as England captain because he sees in him the same image I now have of him.

Do you regret not winning titles with Portugal after finishing second at Euro 2004 and fourth in 2006 World Cup?
Yes, I regret it. It would have been the most fantastic achievement of my life because I would have been a coach who would have won the World Cup followed by a Euro and nobody has done that before. We did our best but on that day [Euro 2004 Final] Greece played well and had a bit of luck. Sometimes we say this doesn't exist in football but anyway they had a bit of luck and we did not make it into first place. That does not mean it was not a good campaign, it was spectacular for me and for Portugal. It was a great time because it followed my move from Brazil to Europe to be in charge of nation who hadn't qualified for the 2002 World Cup. But Portugal made great progress in the five years I was there.

Why do Brazilian coaches not enjoy the same success as players? We only have Zico in Uzbekistan and a few others.
I would say to you that is because the idea people have in Europe that it is very easy to be coach in Brazil. I say it is not that easy, actually it is much more difficult. You have to choose between many more options. So, it is more difficult.

There you have 400 to pick 20, here you have 40?
That's it, so you need more quality in the way you chose it, you need to be right in your selection. I also think that sometimes managers who have come to Europe can achieve the results demanded but there is no follow-up. Some of them also come here with the idea to stay two, three years, four years, to earn some good salary and then go back to Brazil. I thought about coming, staying, winning and having my name known in Europe. Only when I finish my career as a football coach do I want to go back to Brazil. I don't miss anything that I don't have in Brazil. I adapted perfectly, my family is also totally adapted. So, you also need this attitude – and you should not worry that in Brazil it is warmer, there is the beach, etc. There are things here which are also interesting.

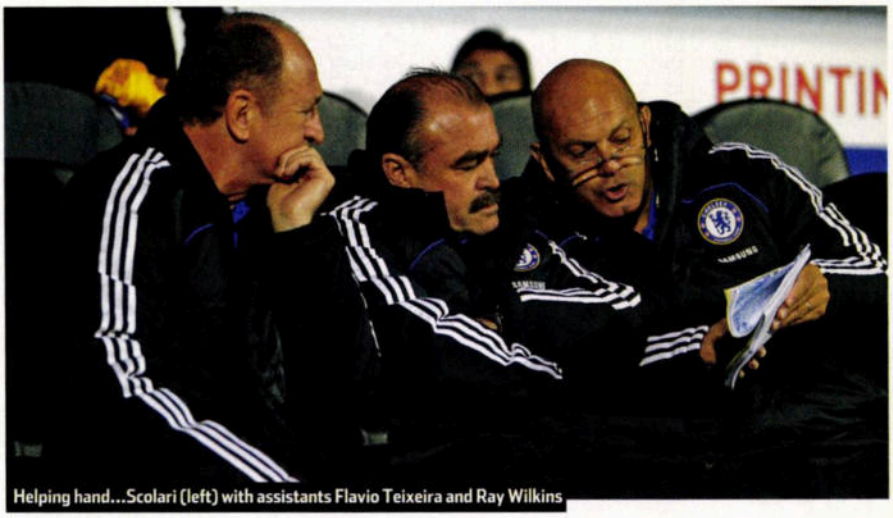
How do you see Brazil's campaign for 2010 and what's missing for Dunga to introduce a more efficient and attractive style?
I say that for Brazil to be more attractive and efficient, it only needs two or three matches to seal qualification. After that, things will happen more naturally and that's the way it was with me. Up to the last qualifying match, things were difficult but after that we adapted better because all of the following games were friendlies, which were good for experimenting. So, from that time on we had a situation where I could demand more from the players; I could do what I wanted because qualification was guaranteed. I could say certain things and whoever did not follow or respond, I would put aside. I think that's what Dunga will naturally do.

Do you think Dunga needs more experience?
No, I think he has a lot of experience because he played in some of the best teams in the world. He was a player who worked with some of the best managers in the world. He always had a coach inside him, so it is not the fact that he has not coached a club before that will make him different from others. No, he is a good manager but it is normal that things happen along the way like in the Olympics, the Copa America. All of that adds to a learning curve that will make him into a manager with the qualities to get to the World Cup, where he can put his wishes into action.

Even Chelsea enemies have become Chelsea's friends. How did you change the image of a club which was at the most envied and is now admired by neutrals?
No, it is due to the players and their characteristics. We are playing a more open, closer football, more touches, closer to each other. Don't forget that we included Deco in the team – and he is a player who does that transition. And like Deco, [we have] other players of great quality like Lampard, Anelka, their football grows because they work more with the ball. All of this makes the team be seem more "Brazilianised".

So, are Chelsea playing the beautiful game Brazil are so famous for?
I agree that Chelsea are playing well. But I hope they agree with me that it is also important to get to the final and to win that final, as well as play well. But to achieve that we still have a long road ahead.

New boy...Deco with Frank Lampard



Helping hand...Scolari (left) with assistants Flavio Teixeira and Ray Wilkins

But it is true that are playing fine, working the ball well, showing a lot of creativity and also finishing power. We have a good tactical system and every player is trying to make life hard for their opponents. It is great to play beautiful but three points are always important.

Looking a bit ahead, the transfer window opens in January. You only bought one player so far, Deco. Which players do you like at the moment in the Premier League that would be good to see at Chelsea?
I look now at all the games and players in the Premier League and some games in the Championship.

Anybody special caught your attention? What about Zaki, the Egyptian striker who has been a sensation for Wigan?
No, no, I follow two or three players that I looked at and I like. But judgment is not based only on one game. I need to know his life, if he had played only one or two games very well and his previous history. Step by step, in three or four months, I have an idea about two or three or four players.

Do you think the trend to get players out of Brazil at an increasingly early age will, in the end, affect the quality of Brazilian football in the long term?
No, I don't think so. What is missing is good scouting in Brazil to discover these players and take them to play for Sao Paulo, Gremio, Corinthians. If they allow other people to go there and to find and get players, it is not their fault. Brazilian football has to look at this in a different way. If the players come to Europe at 16, 17, they gain a very good professional mentality. So, when they come back and play for the national side, they have the capacity to help players who are there. That should be the focus in Brazil – rather than highlighting that they left early. They leave early because opportunities appear in a different way and they must be taken.

Why did Robinho not come to Chelsea? Were you frustrated or upset about it?
I am not frustrated but he is a man that I like because he plays very well. He said many times when he was at Real Madrid he wanted to come to Chelsea because they were very good and he wanted to arrive as the best player in the world. If he had come to Chelsea, it would have been very good for him. But business is business, I don't know what happened, I don't want to say what I know about this because it is not very important or relevant any more.

Gremio have been fighting for the Brazilian championship. Do you hope they can win the title and are they still very much your club?
For sure. In football we can never say that you are going to play against A and B and win, even if this team is in the best positions. So, I support [coach] Celso [Roth], I support Gremio. For the people who are at the club, I would love to see Gremio Brazilian champions in December, I would love to see them celebrating this championship – it would be great. But I think it will go to the wire, to the last two or three games because it is very tight. Every week there are changes, a shake up, a team goes up, another one goes down, every week, so let's wait and see.

You turned 60 in November. Any special present from Mr Abramovich?
No, I just hope my players keep being good friends with me and understanding what we need to achieve together. What I hope from Abramovich is that he keeps trusting me since he contracted me and the present I already received when I completed my 60 years on November 9 is the job I got at Chelsea. It is like crowning a long effort, the cherry on the top of the cake that I needed in my sporting career. So, I got this present already and with the friendships I am making, mainly here in London, from Chelsea, fans, I am already fully grateful.

Interview by Pedro Redig

More interviews at worldsoccer.com/interviews

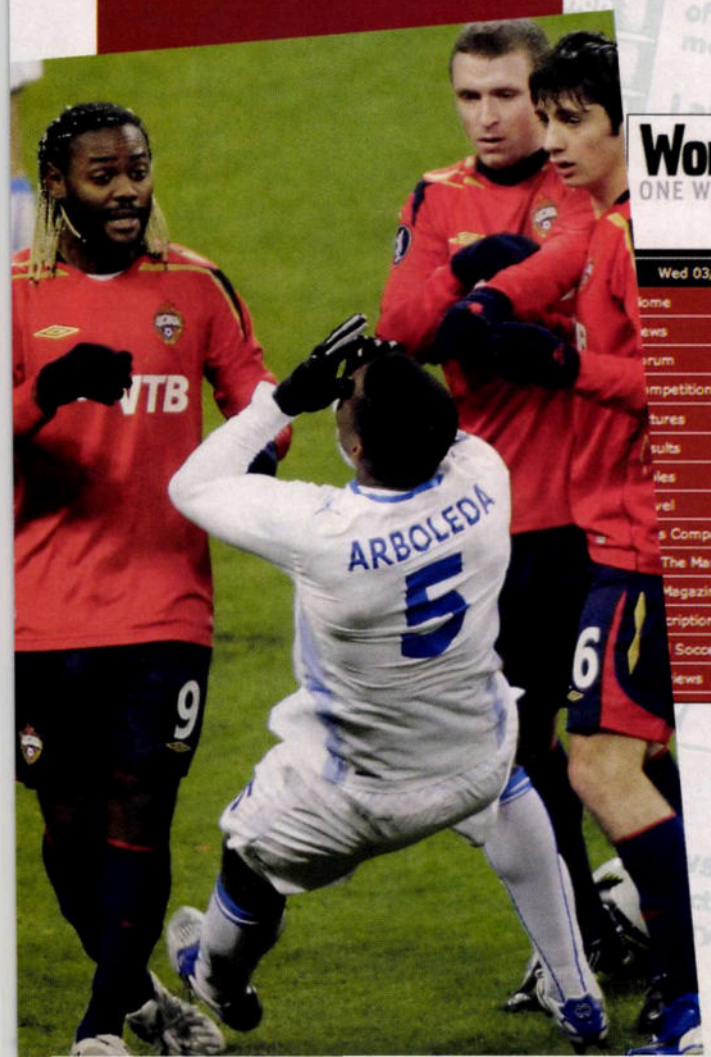
WorldSoccer

@ worldsoccer.com

ON THE WEB

THE LATEST **NEWS...**

THE STRONGEST **VIEWS...**



- Expanded results service
- Brian Glanville's weekly column
- Editor Gavin Hamilton's blog

YES! I would like to subscribe to World Soccer

Send coupon to:

UK only: IPC Media Ltd., FREEPOST SEA 4394, Haywards Heath, WEST SUSSEX, RH16 3BR (No stamp needed)

Overseas: IPC Media Ltd., PO Box 272, Haywards Heath, WEST SUSSEX, RH16 3FS, UK (Affix correct postage)

☐ 6 monthly Direct Debit, UK only, pay only £18.70 every 6 months saving 20% off the full price of £23.40

☐ 2 year subscription (26 issues),
☐ 1 year subscription (13 issues), } See price and country details opposite and complete details below

Postal Region: Price £/$/€:

YOUR DETAILS:

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss: Forename:

Surname:

If you would like to receive emails from IPC and World Soccer containing news, special offers product and service information and, occasionally, take part in our magazine research via email, please include your email below.

Email:

Address:

Post/Zipcode:

State/Country:

Home Tel No: (inc. country & area code)

Would you like to receive messages to your mobile from IPC and World Soccer containing news, special offers, product and service information and take part in our research? If yes, please include your mobile phone number here.

Mobile No.:

Year of Birth:

I WOULD LIKE TO SEND A GIFT TO:

Please also fill out 'Your Details' above. To give more than one subscription, please supply address details on a separate sheet.

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss: Forename:

Surname:

Address:

Post/Zipcode:

State/Country:

Home Tel No: (inc. country & area code)

If the person you're buying this subscription for is under 18, please add their year of birth below:

Year of Birth:

CHOOSE FROM 3 EASY WAYS TO PAY:

1. Pay £18.70 every 6 months by Direct Debit
   Simply complete your bank details in the Direct Debit form provided below
2. I enclose a cheque/International money order made payable to IPC Media Ltd., for the amount of £/$/€ _____
3. Please debit £/$/€_____ from my:
   ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Amex ☐ Maestro (UK only)

Card No: (Maestro only)

Expiry Date: Issue No./Start Date:

Signature: Date:
(I am over 18)

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

For office use only. Originator's reference - 764 221

DIRECT Debit

A/C No

Name of Bank:

Address:

Postcode:

Account Name:

Sort Code: Account No:

Please pay IPC Media Ltd. Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with IPC Media Ltd. and if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

Signature: Date:
(I am over 18)

Final closing date for all orders is 1st February 2009. Orders received before the 9th December 2008 will begin with the February 2009 issue published in January. Orders received after 9th December 2008 will start with the first available issue. All prices are discounted from the full subscription rate advertised in each title, include P&P and are correct at time of going to press. Credit/debit card charges will be taken in sterling. The 6-monthly offer is only available by Direct Debit. If the magazine ordered changes frequency per annum, we will honour the number of issues paid for, not the term of the subscription. Gifts are subject to availability, only available to UK subscribers and will be delivered separately within 28 days after your first payment has been taken. IPC reserve the right to send another gift of equal or higher value, should the gift run out of stock. If you cancel your subscription within one year, IPC reserve the right to refund you for the unexpired portion of your subscription, less the value of your free gift. **For enquiries call: +44 (0)845 123 1231, or email: ipcsubs@quadrantsubs.co.uk.** World Soccer, published by IPC Media Ltd (IPC), will collect your personal information to process your order. World Soccer and IPC would like to contact you by post or telephone to promote and ask your opinion on our magazines and services. Please tick here if you prefer not to hear from us ☐. IPC may occasionally pass your details to carefully selected organisations so that they can contact you by telephone or post with regards to promoting and researching their products and services. Please tick here if you prefer not to be contacted ☐. IPC would like to email you with offers from carefully selected organisations and brands, promoting and researching their products and services. If you want to receive these messages please tick here ☐. The prize draw: The prize will be a week's accommodation for two people sharing a room on a room only basis. The resort will be the four star Amaryllis Beach Resort, in Barbados. Tick here to enter prize draw only ☐. A full list of prize draw terms and conditions is available on request from the address above or at www.magazinesdirect.com/competitionterms Entrants must be over 18. No purchase necessary.

CODE: ANQ8

Free

SPECIAL OFFER PRICES

Direct Debit (UK only). Pay £18.70 every 6 months
Save 20% off the full price of £23.40

Postal Region	Full 2 Year Price	You Save	You Pay	Full 1 Year Price	You Save	You Pay
UK	~~£93.60~~	20%	£74.85	~~£46.80~~	15%	£39.78
Europe	~~€176.86~~	32%	€120.26	~~€88.43~~	31%	€61.01
USA (Direct Entry)	~~$259.48~~	35%	$168.60	~~$129.74~~	31%	$89.50
Rest of World	~~£161.84~~	32%	£110.05	~~£80.92~~	31%	£55.83

Gift is only available to UK subscribers

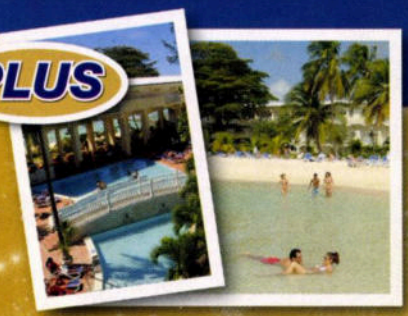
BUY MORE SAVE MORE!

Huge savings on other great magazines when you buy 2 or more subscriptions.

OVER 70 MAGAZINES TO CHOOSE FROM.

EXTRA SAVINGS ONLY AVAILABLE ONLINE OR BY PHONE

PLUS



WIN! a dream holiday for two in Barbados, worth up to £3,000

For more details visit: www.magazinesdirect.com

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

European Football Yearbook 2008/9

Plus save up to 20%

- A subscription makes a thoughtful and lasting gift.
- Huge savings when you buy two or more magazines online. Over 70 titles to choose from.
- Delivery direct to your door.
- Why not treat yourself to a subscription?

Place your gift order by 9th December 2008, and you'll receive a gift card to send on to the recipient before Christmas.

Unfortunately we cannot guarantee this on overseas orders.

Order online, by phone or post (see coupon opposite)

www.magazinesdirect.com/soccergift3 | +44 (0)845 123 1231

Please have your payment details ready when you call. Quote code: ANQ8. Lines open 7 days a week, 8am to 9pm (UK time).

THE DIRECT DEBIT GUARANTEE: This Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society. If the amounts to be paid or the payment dates change, IPC Media Ltd. will notify you at least ten days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If an error is made by IPC Media Ltd. or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid. You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of the letter to us. Direct Debits can ONLY be paid through a Bank or Building Society. Your Direct Debit price will stay the same for one year from the start date.

SIX OF THE BEST ADRIANOs

ADRIANO Vieira Louzada
FC PORTO

THE 29-YEAR-OLD Brazilian front man has experienced plenty of highs in his three years at Porto, whom he joined from leading Belo Horizonte side Cruzeiro in January 2006. He has competed in the Champions League, played his part in their conquest of a hat-trick of Portuguese league titles and scored the winner in the Final of the 2006 national Cup. But right now it is bad as it could get – frozen out of first team life after refusing to move to Lisbon team Belenenses last summer. Adriano said he wanted to stay and fight for his place at the reigning Portuguese champions. His bosses thought differently, happy to go with a striking department featuring Lisandro Lopes, Mariano Gonzalez, Hulk and Sektioui. Opportunistic, bullish, good in the air and known for his liking for late goals, Adriano started out in Sao Paulo with Portuguesa and Palmeiras, then played for Vitoria Bahia before taking the usual trade route to Portugal in 2002, linking up with Madeira's Nacional and piling on the goals.

Luiz ADRIANO de Souza da Silva
SHAKHTAR DONETSK

PERSEVERANCE IS paying off for the Ukraine-based ex-Brazil Under-20 frontrunner after a lengthy spell struggling to come to terms with the game in Eastern Europe. Luiz Adriano, bought by Shakhtar from Internacional Porto Alegre for £2.5million in March 2007, spent his first 18 months in Donetsk desperately out of form and confidence, doing precious little to convince coach Mirecea Lucescu he was worth a run in the side. But with Shakhtar slow to come out of the starting blocks this season, Lucescu turned in desperation to the young Brazilian, who this time was ready for the challenge. Once a Shakhtar striking afterthought, the 21-year-old's stock has risen dramatically, even to the point of shining in the Champions League. Unfortunately his renaissance was curtailed by the need for an appendix operation. He first burst on the scene at the 2006 Club World Cup, coming off the bench to head home the winner in Internacional's 2-1 semi-final victory over Al Ahly of Egypt.

ADRIANO Pereira da Silva
MONACO

THESE ARE not good times for Monte Carlo football. For the fourth straight season the Monegasques are struggling domestically and coach Ricardo is coming under heavy fire for his sterile tactics. One exception to the largely depressing rule is the fine work at right-back of the 26-year-old Brazilian who joined from Serie A outfit Atalanta on transfer deadline day in August 2007. Some critics labelled his arrival as a panic move by Ricardo. His tenacious marking, aerial ability air and quick and adroit attacking play has set the record straight. Early in his career at top Porto Alegre side Gremio, he occupied a central defensive slot and was good enough to make Brazil's Olympic squad, then managed by Ricardo. Only on moving to Italy in 2004 did he switch to a wider berth, persuaded to do so by Palermo coach Francesco Guidolin. At first, he found it hard to adapt and only played once for the Sicilians, but on moving to Atalanta the following season everything clicked. His improvement was crowned by a rash of headed goals from set-pieces.

Nick Bidwell picks the leading namesakes of Internazionale's Brazilian striker (right)

ADRIANO Correia Claro
SEVILLA

A KEY FIGURE in the Sevilla side which won consecutive UEFA Cups in 2006 and 2007 – he opened the scoring in the 2007 Final against Espanyol – the left-back or left-sided midfielder has been a sure source of tricks, pace and feisty competitiveness since arriving in Andalucia three years ago from Coritiba. But these days he is not quite so sure of a starting place, a consequence of the blossoming of wide midfielder Diego Capel and the summer signing of Spanish international full-back Fernando Navarro from Mallorca. Injuries have not helped the Brazil international either, particularly a troublesome groin. Adriano is, however, not giving up without a fight. When given a chance by coach Manolo Jimenez in La Liga or UEFA Cup, he has been as committed and dynamic as ever. This summer he was rumoured to be on the shopping list of Tottenham and Internazionale. Yet he has taken on the role of Sevilla rabble-rouser, claiming on countless occasions that his team will be on top of La Liga table next spring.

ADRIANO Fabiano Rossato
MALAGA

THIS POLISHED left-back and free-kick specialist has been doing the rounds of Iberian football since leaving Sao Paulo club Marilla in 2002, turning out for Portuguese sides Nacional of Madeira, FC Porto – where he surprisingly got no further than the reserves – Braga and Uniao Leiria, plus Spanish outfits Real Sociedad and latest posting Malaga, whom he helped win promotion to La Liga last season. No doubt as to his most productive period. That was at Nacional (2002-04) when he managed a remarkable 17 goals in 64 league appearances, including a hat-trick in a 3-0 victory over Beira Mar in April 2004. Of late he has been hampered by a thigh injury and recently underwent surgery to cure fibrosis. He hails from Vila Velha, a seaside town in the Esprito Santo state in south-east Brazil and began his professional career at famous Rio side Botafogo.

ADRIANO Leite Ribeiro
INTERNAZIONALE

THE INTER and Brazil striker is his own worst enemy. With his impressive panoply of physical, technical and mental gifts, especially his coolness in the box and power-packed left-footed shooting, he should have been the long term successor to Ronaldo. Instead he appears overwhelmed by his demons.
Last season his bosses at Internazionale, exasperated by his nocturnal pursuits, lack of fitness and drinking, sent him on loan to Sao Paulo. But on returning to the San Siro this summer, he has returned to his bad old ways, partying, turning up late for training and unwilling to toe the tactical line on the pitch. Never one to compromise with team discipline, Inter boss Jose Mourinho dropped him ("My philosophy is that the player must adapt to the coach's way of thinking") and a departure from the Lombard capital must be imminent. For all his foibles and bad press, he should not remain unemployed for long. He is only 26 and when he is focused, as in certain Champions League games this autumn, he still has a lot to offer.

ITALY

EURO SQUADS 2008-09

ATALANTA

GOALKEEPERS		
91	Simone COLOMBI	01.07.91
1	Andrea CONSIGLI	27.01.87
31	Ferdinando COPPOLA	10.06.78
DEFENDERS		
6	Gianpaolo BELLINI	27.03.80
27	Daniele CAPELLI	20.06.86
5	Thomas MANFREDINI	27.05.80
26	Maximiliano PELLEGRINO (Arg)	26.01.80
16	Claudio RIVALTA	
2	Leonardo TALAMONTI (Arg)	12.11.81
MIDFIELDERS		
79	ADRIANO Ferreira Pinto (Bra)	10.12.79
28	Giacomo BONAVENTURA	22.08.89
46	Simone CEREA	16.02.89
21	Luca CIGARINI	20.06.86
23	COSTINHA (Por)	01.12.74
18	Antonino D'AGOSTINO	
15	Diego DE ASCENTIS	
72	Cristiano DONI	01.04.73
8	Gyorgy GARICS (Aut)	08.03.84
17	Tiberio GUARENTE	01.11.85
7	Alessio MANZONI	10.04.87
89	Michele MARCONI	13.05.89
22	Simone PADOIN	18.03.84
FORWARDS		
11	Alessio CERCI	23.07.87
9	Karamoko CISSE (Gui)	14.11.88
34	Marino DEFENDI	19.08.85
33	Sergio FLOCCARI	12.11.81
32	Christian VIERI	12.07.73
20	Jaime Valdes ZAPATA (Chl)	11.01.81
COACH		
	Luigi DEL NERI	23.08.50

BOLOGNA

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Francesco ANTONIOLI	14.09.69
15	Roberto COLOMBO	24.08.75
DEFENDERS		
28	Alessandro BASSOLI	19.06.90
29	Giacomo BASSOLI	19.06.90
6	Miguel Angel BRITOS (Uru)	17.07.85
14	Marcello CASTELLINI	02.01.73
77	COELHO (Bra)	22.03.83
23	Salvatore LANNA	31.07.76
18	Vangelis MORAS (Gre)	26.08.81
30	Giuseppe NAZZANI	27.06.90
19	Claudio TERZI	19.06.84
21	Cristian ZENONI	23.04.77
MIDFIELDERS		
4	Christian AMOROSO	22.09.76
10	Davide BOMBARDINI	21.06.74
16	Davide CARRUS	19.03.79
32	Federico CASARINI	07.08.89
3	CESAR (Bra)	24.10.74
34	Simone CONFALONE	21.01.74
74	Luigi LAVECCHIA	25.08.81
2	Davide MARCHINI	23.02.81
8	Nicola MINGAZZINI	13.08.80
26	Gaby MUDINGAYI (Blg)	01.10.81
22	Gabriele PAONESSA	18.04.87
31	Riccardo PASI	27.08.90
17	Diego RODRIGUEZ (Uru)	08.08.86
7	Francesco VALIANI	29.10.80
5	Sergio VOLPI	02.02.74
FORWARDS		
20	ADAILTON (Bra)	24.11.77
11	Marco BERNACCI	15.12.83
9	Marco DI VAIO	15.07.76
COACH		
	Sinisa MIHAJLOVIC (Ser)	20.02.69

CAGLIARI

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Simone ARESTI	15.03.86
24	Cristiano LUPATELLI	21.06.78
22	Federico MARCHETTI	07.02.83
12	Mauro VIGORITO	22.05.90
DEFENDERS		
31	Alessandro AGOSTINI	23.07.79
13	Davide ASTORI	07.01.87
20	Paolo BIANCO	20.08.77
21	Michele CANINI	05.06.85
15	Luca DI LAURA	25.03.91
29	Michele FERRI	29.05.81
6	Diego Luis LOPEZ (Uru)	22.08.74
28	Daniele MAGLIOCCHETTI	11.05.86
25	Carlos MATHEU (Arg)	13.05.85
14	Francesco PISANO	29.04.86
MIDFIELDERS		
8	Davide BIONDINI	24.01.83
4	Salvatore BURRAI	26.05.87
5	Daniele CONTI	09.01.79
23	Michele FINI	14.06.74
10	Andrea LAZZARI	03.12.84
26	Claudio PANI	11.03.86
18	Andrea PAROLA	22.04.79
FORWARDS		
9	Robert ACQUAFRESCA	11.09.87
7	Andrea COSSU	30.05.80
27	JEDA (Bra)	15.04.79
19	Joaquin LARRIVEY (Arg)	20.08.84
32	Alessandro MATRI	15.08.84
30	Daniele RAGATZU	21.09.91
COACH		
	Massimiliano ALLEGRI	11.08.67

CATANIA

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Albano BIZZARRI (Arg)	09.11.77
12	Tomas KOSICKY (Slk)	11.03.86
29	Ciro POLITO	12.04.79
DEFENDERS		
14	Pablo ALVAREZ (Arg)	17.04.84
3	Rocco SABATO	19.04.82
2	Gennaro SARDO	03.05.79
4	Matias SILVESTRE (Arg)	25.09.84
21	Cristian SILVESTRI	21.01.75
6	Lorenzo STOVINI	24.11.76
23	Christian TERLIZZI	22.11.79
MIDFIELDERS		
17	Davide BAIOCCO	08.05.75
27	Marco BIAGIANTI	14.04.81
5	Ezequiel CARBONI (Arg)	04.04.79
28	Giuseppe COLUCCI	24.08.80
10	Nicolae DICA (Rom)	09.05.80
26	Mark EDUSEI (Gha)	29.09.76
13	Mariano IZCO (Arg)	13.03.83
8	Pablo LEDESMA (Arg)	04.02.84
11	Cristian LLAMA (Arg)	26.06.86
19	Giacomo TEDESCO	01.02.76
FORWARDS		
20	Mirco ANTENUCCI	08.09.84
25	Jorge MARTINEZ (Uru)	05.04.83
7	Giuseppe MASCARA	22.08.79
15	Takayuki MORIMOTO (Jap)	07.05.88
16	Gianvito PLASMATI	28.01.83
9	Michele PAOLUCCI	06.02.86
24	Gionatha SPINESI	08.03.78
COACH		
	Walter ZENGA	28.04.60

CHIEVO

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Gabriele ALDEGANI	10.05.76
28	Stefano SORRENTINO	28.03.79
18	Lorenzo SQUIZZI	27.06.74
DEFENDERS		
34	CESAR (Bra)	19.05.79
21	Nicolas FREY (Fra)	06.03.84
6	Marco MALAGO	30.12.78
5	Davide MANDELLI	28.06.77
4	Andrea MANTOVANI	22.06.84
2	Santiago MORERO (Arg)	18.04.82
27	Fabio MORO	13.07.75
3	Francesco SCARDINA	11.12.81
33	Mario YEPES (Col)	13.01.76
MIDFIELDERS		
9	Simone BENTIVOGLIO	29.05.85
13	Emanuele D'ANNA	23.05.82
88	Simone GRIPPO (Swi)	12.12.88
77	Vincenzo ITALIANO	10.12.77
20	KERLON (Bra)	27.01.88
10	LUCIANO (Bra)	03.12.75
7	Michele MARCOLINI	02.10.75
25	Bogdan PATRASCU (Rom)	07.05.79
66	Giampiero PINZI	11.03.81
16	Luca RIGONI	07.12.84
FORWARDS		
23	Erjon BOGDANI (Alb)	14.04.77
79	Mauro ESPOSITO	13.06.79
17	Diego FARIAS (Bra)	10.05.90
11	Antimo IUNCO	10.06.84
97	Antonio LANGELLA	30.03.77
31	Sergio PELLISSIER	12.04.79
COACH		
	Domenico DI CARLO	23.03.64

FIORENTINA

GOALKEEPERS		
25	Vlada AVRAMOV (Ser)	05.04.79
1	Sebastien FREY (Fra)	18.03.80
13	Marco STORARI	07.01.77
DEFENDERS		
21	Gianluca COMOTTO	16.10.78 I
3	Dario DAINELLI	06.09.79
36	Dario FEDI	13.02.89
5	Alessandro GAMBERINI	27.08.81
19	Massimo GOBBI	31.10.80
2	Per KROLDRUP (Den)	31.07.79
15	Ondrej MAZUCH (Cze)	15.03.89
23	Manuel PASQUAL	13.03.82
6	Juan Manuel VARGAS (Per)	05.10.83
MIDFIELDERS		
30	Sergio ALMIRON (Arg)	07.11.80
35	Pape Moussa DIAKHATE (Sen)	22.04.89
4	Marco DONADEL	21.04.83
20	Martin JORGENSEN (Den)	06.10.75
22	Zdravko KUZMANOVIC (Ser)	22.09.87
18	Riccardo MONTOLIVO	18.01.85
24	Mario Alberto SANTANA (Arg)	23.12.81
7	Franco SEMIOLI	20.06.80
14	Luciano ZAURI	20.01.78
FORWARDS		
54	Manuel DA COSTA (Por)	06.05.86
88	FELIPE MELO (Bra)	26.08.83
11	Alberto GILARDINO	05.07.82
8	Stevan JOVETIC (Mnt)	02.11.89
37	Giacomo LEPRI	10.10.90
10	Adrian MUTU (Rom)	08.01.79
17	Papa Waigo NDIAYE (Sen)	20.01.84
9	Pablo Daniel OSVALDO	12.01.86
29	Gianpaolo PAZZINI	02.08.84
COACH		
	Cesare PRANDELLI	19.08.57

GENOA

GOALKEEPERS		
83	RUBINHO (Bra)	04.08.82
73	Alessio SCARPI	19.04.73
DEFENDERS		
25	Giuseppe BIAVA	08.05.77
26	Salvatore BOCCHETTI	30.11.86
29	Davide BRIVIO	17.03.88
4	Domenico CRISCITO	30.12.86
27	Matteo D'ALESSANDRO	18.05.89
13	Matteo FERRARI	05.12.79
20	Giandomenico MESTO	25.05.82
23	Francesco MODESTO	16.02.82
15	Sokratis PAPASTATHOPOULOS (Gre)	09.06.88
3	Alessandro POTENZA	08.03.84
68	Anthony VANDENBORRE (Blg)	24.10.87
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Nicolas DOMINGO (Arg)	08.04.85
17	Bosko JANKOVIC (Ser)	01.03.84
28	Ivan JURIC (Cro)	25.08.75
7	Omar MILANETTO	30.11.75
88	Thiago MOTTA (Bra)	28.08.82
11	Ruben OLIVERA (Uru)	04.05.83
19	Matteo PARO	17.03.83
8	Marcel ROMAN (Uru)	07.02.88
7	Marco ROSSI	01.04.78
FORWARDS		
22	Diego MILITO (Arg)	12.06.79
18	Andrea GASBARRONI	06.08.81
10	Raffaele PALLADINO	17.04.84
22	Diego MILITO (Arg)	12.06.79
41	Giuseppe SCULLI	23.03.81
32	Matteo Perelli TRAVAGLIA	17.05.89
COACH		
	Gian Piero GASPERINI	26.01.58

INTERNAZIONALE

GOALKEEPERS		
12	JULIO CESAR (Bra)	03.09.79
22	Paolo ORLANDONI	12.08.72
1	Francesco TOLDO	02.12.71
DEFENDERS		
16	Nicolas BURDISSO (Arg)	12.04.81
26	Cristian CHIVU (Rom)	26.10.80
2	Ivan CORDOBA (Col)	11.08.76
13	MAICON (Bra)	26.07.81
23	Marco MATERAZZI	19.08.73
6	MAXWELL (Bra)	27.08.81
37	Andrea MEI	18.05.89
24	Nelson RIVAS (Col)	25.03.83
25	Walter SAMUEL (Arg)	23.03.78
39	Davide SANTON	02.01.91
4	Javier ZANETTI (Arg)	10.08.73
MIDFIELDERS		
36	Francesco BOLZONI	07.05.89
19	Esteban CAMBIASSO (Arg)	18.08.80
15	Olivier DACOURT (Fra)	25.09.74
7	Luis FIGO (Por)	04.11.72
11	Luis JIMENEZ (Chn)	17.06.84
20	Sulley MUNTARI (Gha)	27.07.84
5	Dejan STANKOVIC (Ser)	11.09.78
77	Ricardo QUARESMA (Por)	26.09.83
14	Patrick VIEIRA (Fra)	23.06.76
FORWARDS		
10	ADRIANO (Bra)	17.02.82
45	Mario BALOTELLI	12.08.90
18	Hernan CRESPO (Arg)	05.07.75
9	Julio CRUZ (Arg)	10.10.74
8	Zlatan IBRAHIMOVIC (Swe)	03.10.81
33	MANCINI (Bra)	01.08.80
21	Nsofor Victor OBINNA (Nig)	25.03.87
COACH		
	Jose MOURINHO (Por)	26.01.63

JUVENTUS

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Gianluigi BUFFON	28.01.78
12	Antonio CHIMENTI	30.06.70
13	Alex MANNINGER (Aut)	04.06.77
DEFENDERS		
41	Lorenzo ARIAUDO	11.06.89
3	Giorgio CHIELLINI	14.08.84
21	Zdenek GRYGERA (Cze)	14.05.80
14	JORGE ANDRADE (Por)	09.04.78
15	Dario KNEZEVIC (Cro)	20.04.82
33	Nicola LEGROTTAGLIE	20.10.76
4	Olof MELLBERG (Swe)	03.09.77
28	Cristian MOLINARO	30.07.83
5	Jonathan ZEBINA (Fra)	19.07.78
MIDFIELDERS		
16	Mauro CAMORANESI	04.10.76
29	Paolo DE CEGLIE	17.09.86
27	Albin EKDAL (Swe)	28.07.89
20	Sebastian GIOVINCO	26.01.87
32	Marco MARCHIONNI	22.07.80
19	Claudio MARCHISIO	19.01.86
11	Pavel NEDVED (Cze)	30.08.72
18	Christian POULSEN (Den)	28.02.80
7	Hasan SALIHAMIDZIC (Bos)	01.01.77
22	Mohamed SISSOKO (Mli)	22.01.85
30	TIAGO (Por)	02.05.81
6	Cristiano ZANETTI	14.04.77
FORWARDS		
8	AMAURI (Bra)	03.06.80
10	Alessandro DEL PIERO	09.11.74
9	Vincenzo IAQUINTA	21.11.76
17	David TREZEGUET (Fra)	15.10.77
COACH		
	Claudio RANIERI	20.10.51

LAZIO

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Juan Pablo CARRIZO (Arg)	06.05.84
89	Vincent DEGRE (Fra)	05.02.89
86	Fernando MUSLERA (Uru)	16.06.86
DEFENDERS		
7	Manuel BELLERI	29.08.77
25	Emilson CRIBARI (Bra)	06.03.80
29	Lorenzo DE SILVESTRI	23.05.88
87	Mobido DIAKHITE (Fra)	02.03.87
91	Marco Davide FARAONI	25.10.91
3	Aleksandar KOLAROV (Ser)	10.11.85
2	Stephan LICHTSTEINER (Swi)	16.01.84
32	Stefan RADU (Rom)	22.10.86
22	David ROZEHNAL (Cze)	05.07.80
13	Sebastiano SIVIGLIA	29.03.73
16	Alessandro TUIA	08.06.90
MIDFIELDERS		
5	Cristian BROCCHI	30.01.76
6	Ousmane DABO (Fra)	08.02.77
81	Simone DEL NERO	04.08.81
4	Fabio FIRMANI	26.05.78
17	Pasquale FOGGIA	03.06.83
24	Cristian LEDESMA (Arg)	24.09.82
68	Christian MANFREDINI	05.01.75
8	MATUZALEM (Bra)	10.06.80
11	Stefano MAURI	08.01.80
23	Mourad MEGHNI (Fra)	16.04.84
FORWARDS		
21	Simone INZAGHI	05.04.76
20	Libor KOZAK (Ven)	30.05.89
26	Stephen MAKINWA (Nig)	26.07.83
19	Goran PANDEV (Mac)	27.07.83
18	Tommaso ROCCHI	19.09.77
10	Mauro ZARATE (Arg)	18.03.87
COACH		
	Delio ROSSI	26.11.60

EURO SQUADS 2008-09

LECCE

GOALKEEPERS		
99	Francesco BENUSSI	15.10.81
22	Davide PETRACHI	14.08.86
1	Antonio ROSATI	26.06.83
DEFENDERS		
6	ANGELO (Bra)	12.06.81
30	ANTUNES (Por)	01.04.87
5	Souleymane DIAMOUTENE (Mli)	30.01.83
16	Andrea ESPOSITO	17.05.86
40	Alberto GIULIATTO	17.09.83
3	Tiziano POLENGHI	26.09.78
23	Raffaele SCHIAVI	15.03.86
2	Guglielmo STENDARDO	06.05.81
MIDFIELDERS		
21	Andrea ARDITO	08.01.77
19	Luca ARIATTI	27.12.78
77	Dusan BASTA (Ser)	18.08.84
70	Viktor BUDIANSKYI (Rus)	21.01.84
10	Fabio CASERTA	24.09.78
4	FABIANO (Bra)	18.01.82
13	Frank FELTSCHER (Swi)	17.05.88
18	Guillermo GIACOMAZZI (Uru)	21.11.77
15	Hemza MIHOUBI (Fra)	13.01.86
28	Andre MOLLESTAM (Swe)	14.05.91
18	Gianni MUNARI	24.06.83
24	Eduardo Daniel RASCHLE (Par)	15.08.90
20	Giuseppe VIVES	14.07.80
7	Andrea ZANCHETTA	02.02.75
FORWARDS		
9	Daniele CACIA	23.08.83
11	Jose Ignacio CASTILLO (Arg)	04.11.75
25	Axel KONAN (IvC)	25.01.83
29	LEO (Bra)	14.12.83
90	Simone TIRIBOCCHI	31.01.78
COACH		
Mario BERETTA		30.10.59

MILAN

GOALKEEPERS		
12	Christian ABBIATI	08.07.77
1	DIDA (Bra)	07.10.73
16	Zeljko KALAC (Aus)	16.12.72
DEFENDERS		
25	Daniele BONERA	31.05.81
36	Matteo DARMIAN	02.12.89
19	Giuseppe FAVALLI	08.01.72
18	Marek JANKULOVSKI (Cze)	09.05.77
4	Kakha KALADZE (Geo)	27.02.78
3	Paolo MALDINI	26.06.68
13	Alessandro NESTA	19.03.76
24	Philippe SENDEROS (Swi)	14.02.85
15	Gianluca ZAMBROTTA	19.02.77
MIDFIELDERS		
23	Massimo AMBROSINI	29.05.77
77	Luca ANTONINI	04.02.82
14	Mathias CARDACIO (Uru)	02.10.87
5	EMERSON (Bra)	04.04.76
4	Mathieu FLAMINI (Fra)	07.03.84
8	Gennaro GATTUSO	09.01.78
22	KAKA (Bra)	22.04.82
21	Andrea PIRLO	19.05.79
10	Clarence SEEDORF (Hol)	01.04.76
20	Tabare VIUDEZ (Uru)	08.09.89
FORWARDS		
26	Manuel ANGELILLI	05.08.90
11	Marco BORRIELLO	18.06.82
9	Filippo INZAGHI	09.08.73
7	Alexandre PATO (Bra)	02.09.89
80	RONALDINHO (Bra)	21.03.80
76	Andriy SHEVCHENKO (Ukr)	29.09.76
COACH		
Carlo ANCELOTTI		10.06.59

NAPOLI

GOALKEEPERS		
22	Matteo GIANELLO	07.05.76
1	Gennaro IEZZO	08.06.73
30	Nicolas NAVARRO (Arg)	25.03.85
DEFENDERS		
6	Salvatore ARONICA	20.01.78
34	Francesco BRUNO	23.01.90
28	Paolo CANNAVARO	26.06.81
96	Matteo CONTINI	16.04.80
2	Gianluca GRAVA	07.03.77
83	Leandro RINAUDO	09.05.83
13	Fabiano SANTACROCE	24.08.86
9	Mirko SAVINI	11.03.79
MIDFIELDERS		
32	Nicolas AMODIO	10.03.83
8	Manuele BLASI	17.08.80
18	Mariano BOGLIACINO (Uru)	02.06.80
24	Samuele DALLA BONA	06.02.81
23	Walter GARGANO (Uru)	27.07.84
17	Marek HAMSIK (Slk)	27.07.87
11	Cristian MAGGIO	11.02.82
77	Daniele MANNINI	25.10.83
4	Francesco MONTERVINO	07.05.78
5	Michele PAZIENZA	05.08.82
3	Luigi VITALE	05.10.87
FORWARDS		
9	German DENIS (Arg)	10.09.81
7	Ezequiel LAVEZZI (Arg)	03.05.85
12	PIA (Bra)	22.03.82
12	Andrea RUSSOTTO	25.05.88
25	Marcelo ZALAYETA (Uru)	05.12.78
COACH		
Edoardo REJA		10.10.45

PALERMO

GOALKEEPERS		
32	Marco AMELIA	02.04.82
12	Alberto FONTANA	23.01.67
1	Samir UJKANI (Alb)	05.07.88
DEFENDERS		
42	Federico BALZARETTI	06.12.81
5	Cesare BOVO	14.01.83
3	Ciro CAPUANO	10.07.81
80	Morris CARROZZIERI	16.11.80
16	Mattia CASSANI	26.08.83
15	Hernan Paolo DELLAFIORE	02.02.85
24	Simon KJAER (Den)	26.03.89
46	Andrea RAGGI	24.06.84
6	Samuele ROMEO	06.03.89
MIDFIELDERS		
23	Mark BRESCIANO (Aus)	11.02.80
18	Maurizio CIARAMITARO	20.03.82
22	Luca DI MATTEO	25.02.88
14	Roberto GUANA	21.01.81
11	Fabio LIVERANI	29.04.76
8	Giulio MIGLIACCIO	23.06.81
60	Gianvito MISURACA	02.04.90
3	Antonio NOCERINO	09.04.85
30	SIMPLICIO (Bra)	23.09.79
4	Giovanni TEDESCO	13.05.72
FORWARDS		
20	Igor BUDAN (Cro)	22.04.80
7	Edinson CAVANI (Uru)	14.02.87
77	Davide LANZAFAME	09.02.87
99	Levan MCHEDLIDZE (Geo)	24.03.90
10	Fabrizio MICCOLI	27.06.79
19	Davide SUCCI	11.10.81
COACH		
Davide BALLARDINI		06.01.64

REGGINA

GOALKEEPERS		
30	Andrea CAMPAGNOLO	17.06.78
26	Pietro MARINO	24.11.86
1	Christian PUGGIONI	17.01.81
DEFENDERS		
20	Pablo ALVAREZ (Uru)	07.02.85
5	Bruno CIRILLO	21.03.77
13	Francesco COSENZA	05.02.86
3	Andrea COSTA	01.02.86
14	Antonio GIOSA	21.08.83
33	GLEISON Dos Santos (Bra)	18.08.81
5	Maurizio LANZARO	14.03.82
16	Carlos Adrian VALDEZ (Uru)	02.05.83
MIDFIELDERS		
17	Antonino BARILLA	01.04.88
8	Edgar BARRETO (Par)	15.07.84
35	Carlos CARMONA (Chl)	21.02.87
4	Emmanuel CASCIONE	22.09.83
2	Emil HALLFREDSSON (Ice)	26.06.84
77	Alessio SESTU	29.09.83
31	Luca TOGNOZZI	03.10.77
7	Luca VIGIANI	25.08.76
21	Benito Nicolas VIOLA	12.10.89
FORWARDS		
81	Franco BRIENZA	19.03.79
11	Fabio CERAVOLO	05.03.87
9	Bernardo CORRADI	30.03.76
10	Francesco COZZA	19.01.74
88	Davide DI GENNARO	16.06.88
19	Jonis KHORIS (Rom)	15.03.89
86	Christian STUANI (Uru)	12.10.86
COACH		
Nevio ORLANDI		30.01.54

ROMA

GOALKEEPERS		
25	ARTUR (Bra)	25.01.81
32	DONI (Bra)	22.10.79
27	JULIO SERGIO (Bra)	08.11.78
12	Pietro PIPOLO	02.02.86
DEFENDERS		
36	Riccardo BROSCO	03.02.91
77	Marco CASSETTI	29.05.77
3	CICINHO (Bra)	24.06.80
4	JUAN (Bra)	01.02.79
15	Simone LORIA	28.10.76
5	Philippe MEXES (Fra)	30.03.82
2	Christian PANUCCI	12.04.73
17	John Arne RIISE (Nor)	24.09.80
22	Max TONETTO	18.11.74
MIDFIELDERS		
8	Alberto AQUILANI	07.07.84
19	Julio BAPTISTA (Bra)	01.10.81
33	Matteo BRIGHI	14.02.81
16	Daniele DE ROSSI	24.07.83
20	Simone PERROTTA	17.09.77
7	David PIZARRO (Chl)	11.09.79
11	TADDEI (Bra)	06.03.80
FORWARDS		
38	Marco D'ALESSANDRO	17.02.91
24	Jeremy MENEZ (Fra)	07.05.87
23	Vincenzo MONTELLA	18.06.74
89	Stefano OKAKA CHUKA	09.08.89
10	Francesco TOTTI	27.09.76
34	Valerio VIRGA	29.06.86
9	Mirko VUCINIC (Mnt)	01.10.83
COACH		
Luciano SPALLETTI		07.03.59

SAMPDORIA

GOALKEEPERS		
1	Luca CASTELLAZZI	19.07.75
90	Vincenzo FIORILLO	13.01.90
83	Antonio MIRANTE	08.07.83
DEFENDERS		
5	Pietro ACCARDI	12.09.82
14	Jonathan BOTTINELLI (Arg)	14.09.84
54	Nicolo BUONO	07.12.90
16	Hugo CAMPAGNARO (Arg)	27.06.80
28	Daniele GASTALDELLO	25.06.83
6	Stefano LUCCHINI	02.10.80
46	Mirko PIERI	24.07.78
23	Marius STANKEVICIUS (Lit)	15.07.81
MIDFIELDERS		
77	Massimo BONANNI	10.06.82
40	Gennaro DELVECCHIO	25.03.78
88	Daniele DESSENA	10.05.87
19	Daniele FRANCESCHINI	13.01.76
55	Nenad KRSTICIC (Ser)	03.09.90
20	Marco PADALINO (Swi)	08.12.83
17	Angelo PALOMBO	25.09.81
21	Paolo SAMMARCO	17.03.83
3	Reto ZIEGLER (Swi)	16.01.86
FORWARDS		
11	Claudio BELLUCCI	31.05.75
18	Emiliano BONAZZOLI	20.01.79
99	Antonio CASSANO	12.07.82
9	Bruno FORNAROLI (Uru)	07.09.87
89	Guido MARILUNGO	09.08.89
25	Mattia MUSTACCHIO	17.05.89
COACH		
Walter MAZZARRI		01.10.61

SIENA

GOALKEEPERS		
85	Gianluca CURCI	12.07.85
1	Dimitrios ELEFTHEROPOULOS (Gre)	07.08.76
46	Emanuele MANITTA	12.01.77
DEFENDERS		
24	Nicola BELMONTE	15.04.87
15	BRANDAO (Por)	09.10.86
30	Cristiano DEL GROSSO	24.03.83
19	Lorenzo DEL PRETE	12.01.86
20	Daniele FICAGNA	23.02.81
16	Cosmin MOTI (Rom)	03.12.84
90	Daniele PORTANOVA	17.12.78
3	RODRIGO (Bra)	10.12.80
3	Luca ROSSETTINI	09.05.85
21	Andrea ROSSI	07.11.86
2	Camilo ZUNIGA (Col)	14.12.85
MIDFIELDERS		
6	Ahmed BARUSSO (Gha)	26.12.84
15	Paul CODREA (Rom)	04.04.81
55	Manuel COPPOLA	11.05.82
14	Daniele GALLOPPA	15.05.85
23	Lukas JAROLIM (Cze)	29.07.76
10	Houssine KHARJA (Mor)	09.11.82
31	PACKER (Bra)	13.03.87
22	Maximiliano RE (Arg)	23.03.87
8	Simone VERGASSOLA	24.01.76
33	Antonio ZITO	06.06.86
FORWARDS		
11	Emanuele CALAIO	08.01.82
17	Fernando FORESTIERI	16.01.90
7	Mario FRICK (Lie)	07.09.74
18	Abdel Kader GHEZZAL (Fra)	05.12.84
9	Marcelo LARRONDO (Arg)	16.08.88
32	Massimo MACCARONE	06.09.79
COACH		
Marco GIAMPAOLO		02.08.67

TORINO

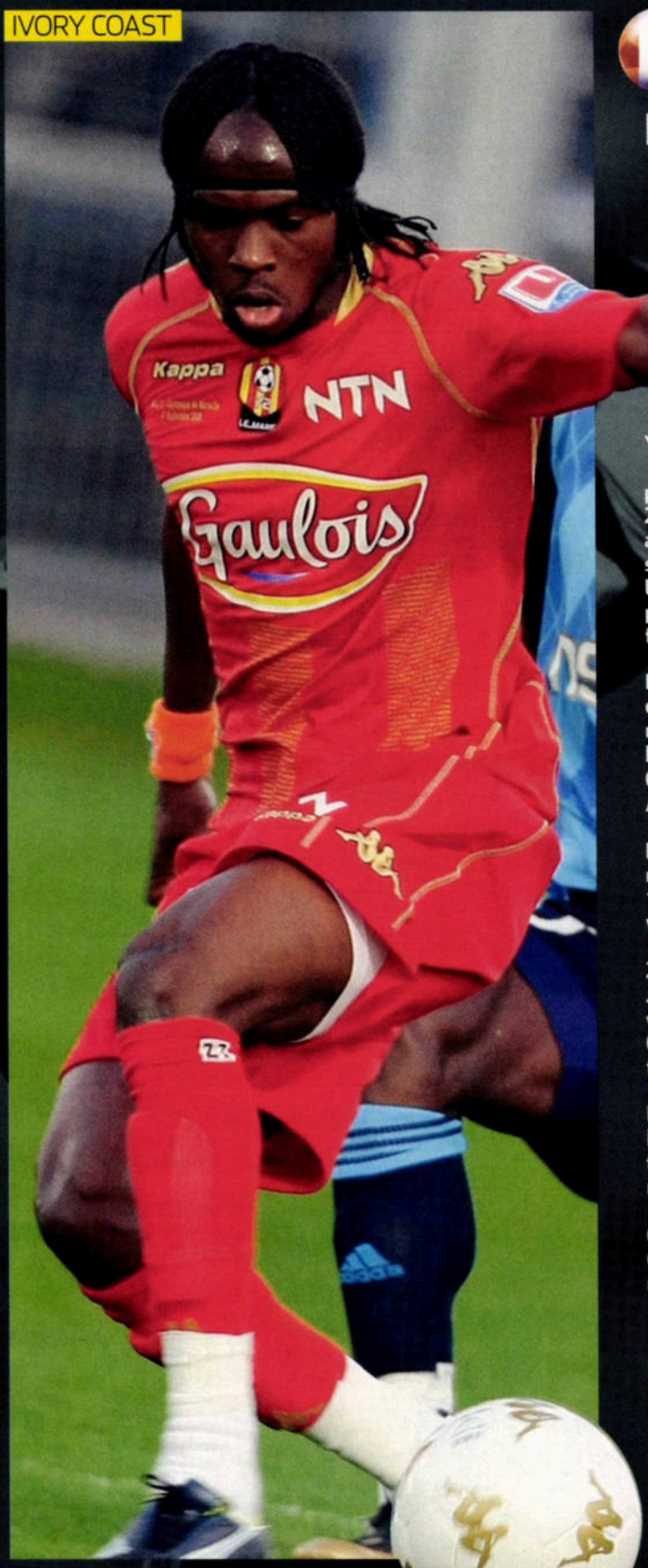
GOALKEEPERS		
99	Alex CALDERONI	03.05.76
31	Alberto FONTANA	02.12.74
1	Matteo SERENI	11.02.75
DEFENDERS		
32	Riccardo COLOMBO	01.12.82
22	Marco DI LORETO	28.09.74
21	Ivan FRANCESCHINI	07.12.76
4	Cesare NATALI	05.04.79
6	Angelo OGBONNA	23.05.88
3	Marco PISANO	13.08.81
50	Francesco PRATALI	17.01.79
33	Matteo RUBIN	09.07.87
MIDFIELDERS		
23	Ignazio ABATE	12.11.86
8	Simone BARONE	30.04.78
5	Eugenio CORINI	30.07.70
19	Aimo DIANA	02.01.78
4	Blerim DZEMAILI (Swi)	12.04.86
10	Alessandro ROSINA	31.01.84
24	Jurgen SAUMEL (Aut)	08.09.84
28	Tommaso VAILATTI	01.02.86
27	Paolo ZANETTI	16.12.82
FORWARDS		
9	Elvis ABBRUSCATO	14.04.81
11	Nicola AMORUSO	29.08.74
90	Rolando BIANCHI	15.02.83
18	Dominique MALONGA (Fra)	08.01.89
30	Roberto STELLONE	27.07.77
7	Nicola VENTOLA	24.05.78
COACH		
Gianni DE BIASI		16.06.56

UDINESE

GOALKEEPERS		
80	Emanuele BELARDI	09.10.77
22	Samir HANDANOVIC (Sln)	14.07.84
12	Jan KOPRIVEC (Sln)	15.07.88
DEFENDERS		
3	Andrea CODA	25.04.85
6	Maurizio DOMIZZI	28.06.80
19	FELIPE (Bra)	31.07.84
32	Damiano FERRONETTI	01.11.84
24	Aleksandar LUKOVIC (Ser)	23.10.82
51	MORENO (Bra)	23.02.83
23	Marco MOTTA	14.05.86
25	Alain NEF (Swi)	06.02.82
26	Giovanni PASQUALE	05.01.82
99	Luigi SALA	21.02.74
3	Nikola VUJADINOVIC (Mnt)	17.07.86
2	Cristian ZAPATA (Col)	30.09.86
MIDFIELDERS		
21	Gaetano D'AGOSTINO	03.06.82
88	Gokhan INLER (Swi)	27.06.84
15	Mauricio ISLA (Chl)	12.06.88
5	Christian OBODO (Nig)	11.05.84
8	Fernando TISSONE (Arg)	24.07.86
FORWARDS		
20	Kwadwo ASAMOAH (Gha)	12.09.88
10	Antonio DI NATALE	13.10.77
3	Antonio FLORO FLORES	18.06.83
9	Odion Jude IGHALO (Nig)	16.06.89
7	Simone PEPE	30.08.83
11	Alexis SANCHEZ (Chl)	19.12.88
27	Fabio QUAGLIARELLA	31.01.83
COACH		
Pasquale MARINO		13.06.62

More squads online at www.worldsoccer.com/squads

IVORY COAST



GERVINHO

Latest ASEC product maturing in France

THE NOW world-famous ASEC Abidjan football academy, the institution founded in the Ivory Coast capital by former France midfielder Jean-Marc Guillou, continues to bear succulent fruit. Kolo and Yaya Toure, Emmanuel Eboue, Romaric and Arthur Boka all began their round ball education there, as did the school's latest high-flying graduate, Le Mans attacker Gervais Yao Kouassi, otherwise known as Gervinho.

At a time when far too many coaches in France's Ligue 1 preach safety-first, 'what we have we hold' tactics, 21-year-old Gervinho's off-the-cuff skills, afterburner pace and perpetual motion make for a rare breath of fresh air in a sporting environment which often borders on the stagnant. Usually lined up on the right flank, though comfortable playing through the middle too, he is a jackhammer of a forward, capable of punching a sizeable hole in any defence.

All the signs are green for go. If last season, his first in French football following a move from Belgians Beveren, he exploded into life intermittently, these days he poses a much more permanent threat, exemplified by an improvement in his finishing. In 2007-08 he managed just two goals; by October this term he already had twice as many. No wonder Arsenal and several top Spanish sides are hunting him.

"Every opponent knows the score with him – once he has broken clear, he cannot be caught," says Le Mans head of recruitment, ex-Switzerland coach Daniel Jeandupeux. "Couple his speed with an astonishing presence of mind when playing a final ball and you have a wonderful creator."

When Jeandupeux first recommended him to the club in 2006, coach Frederic Hantz was not interested. But Jeandupeux would not let it rest and a year later, after Hantz was replaced by Rudi Garcia, the deal was resurrected. Gervinho arrived in a £500,000 package which included fellow Ivorians, full-back Ouattara and stopper Zito.

Within weeks of signing, Gervinho was making headlines. Despite Le Mans' 3-2 defeat at champions Lyon he was a logical choice as man of the match, setting up both his team's goals and generally giving the runaround to his marker, the hapless Italian World Cup winner Fabio Grosso.

"The game was a turning point in every sense," recalls Gervinho, who has skippered the Ivorian Under-21 and Olympic sides. "I earned the trust of my coach and boosted my confidence no end. I realised how decisive I can be."

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Country Ivory Coast
Club Le Mans
Born May 27, 1987, in Anyama
Previous clubs Academy JMG, ASEC Abidjan, Toumodi FC, Beveren (Blg)
International debut November 2007, v Qatar
International caps 6 (0 goals)

BATUHAN

Besiktas teenager on fast track to fame

SOMETIMES your luck is in, sometimes not. Given his first full Turkish cap against Bosnia this autumn at only 17, Besiktas striker Batuhan was forced off after 39 minutes with a dislocated shoulder.

His chance will come again. He is already firmly in the prodigy category thanks to dominance in the air, power, staccato bursts of speed and eye for goal. Some say he is too selfish in and around the box, but he is far from a creative-free zone.

Talk of him as the heir apparent to the legendary Hakan Sukur is not new. The Istanbul media have been praising him since 2006 and went into overdrive last season when he became the youngest player to appear in the top flight at 16 years, 115 days. A week later he duly chalked up his first professional goal against Gaziantepspor.

Batuhan insists his priority is to learn his craft with the Black Eagles – yet Premier League and Bundesliga scouts watch his every move. So do Shakhtar Donetsk boss Mircea Lucescu – a former Besiktas coach – and FC Porto. So will it be home comforts or lucrative flight?

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Club Besiktas
Country Turkey
Born April 24, 1991, in Istanbul
Previous clubs Yurdu
International debut October 2008, v Bosnia
International caps 1 (0 goals)

TURKEY

RUSSIA

Alan DZAGOEV

CSKA's new midfield pearl

ANDREI Arshavin was expected to be the star of the Russian League this autumn. Instead, his thunder has been stolen by an 18-year-old who only played his first senior game in April.

Alan Dzagoev is already a regular starter in CSKA Moscow's midfield. His assists to Wagner Love were a major factor in the Brazilian striker topping the goalscoring charts, while Dzagoev's own performances have helped CSKA fans forget about Daniel Carvalho, who left earlier this year.

Dzagoev became Russia's youngest outfield debutant as a half-time substitute in the World Cup qualifier against Germany in October. A second cap four days later against Finland confirmed he is rated highly by national coach Guus Hiddink, who is committed to blooding new talent during the qualifying campaign.

Dzagoev scored twice as CSKA beat Deportivo La Coruna 3-0 in the UEFA Cup, prompting the Spanish media to call him "a new Russian pearl" and suggest a move to Real Madrid was not impossible for "another Beckham".

He was a shoo-in as Russia's Newcomer of the Year and was also tipped to beat leading candidates Yuri Zhirkov, Igor Akinfeev and Danny for Player of the Year.

"My favourite is Chelsea," said Dzagoev when asked if he would like to go to Madrid. But he feels Western Europe can wait, adding: "I like CSKA a lot and see no reason to move yet."

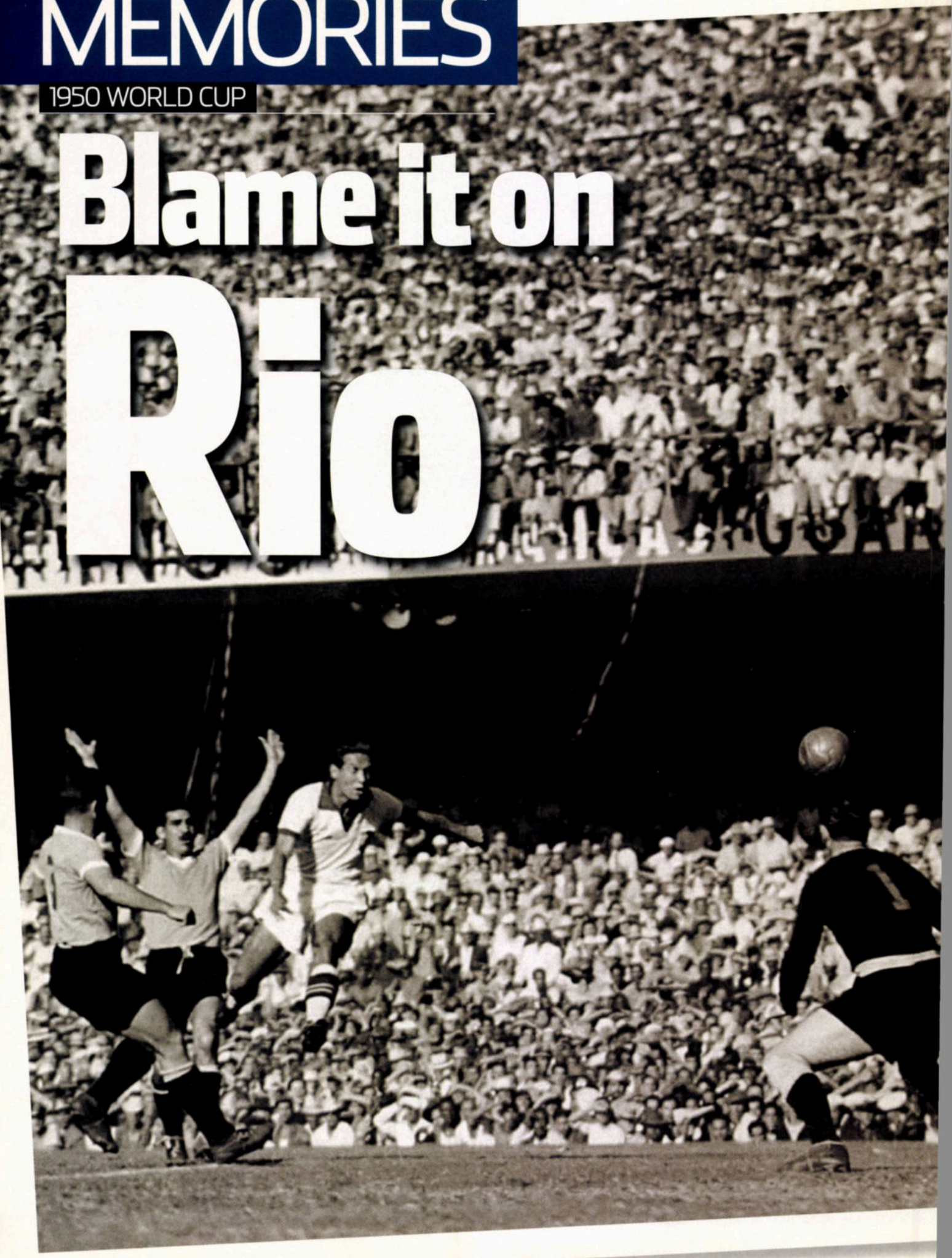
Victor Gusev

FACT FILE

Club CSKA Moscow
Country Russia
Born June 17, 1990, in Beslan
Previous clubs Krylia Sovetov
International debut October 2008, v Germany
International caps 2 (0 goals)

1950 WORLD CUP

Blame it on Rio



So close...Brazil full back Arambura fires just wide of Roque Maspoli's goal during the deciding match against Uruguay

Brian Glanville remembers the extraordinary tournament in Brazil decided by a thriller that wasn't a real Final.

HAS THERE EVER, could there ever, be such a World Cup as 1950's in Brazil? One of such paradox and drama. One which produced the humiliation of the England team by a pick-and-mix United States. One which was contested by a mere 13 rather than the full 16 teams, with one country after another dropping out for dubious reasons; where today any country would give its eye teeth to compete in the finals. And one in which, thanks to the perverse arrangements by FIFA, there was no actual Final at all. Yet the final and decisive game between Uruguay and Brazil outshone in excitement and surprise any "real" Final, before or since.

This was, of course, the first World Cup tournament since 1938, the war having put paid to those potentially scheduled for 1942 and 1946. For the first time, the four British countries, returning at last to FIFA, all took part. The world ruling body not only and controversially delineated the British International tournament as a qualifying group, but also allowed it not one but two qualifiers. Yet one of which, in the shape of Scotland, as we shall see, petulantly and perversely spurned their invitation.

> **"George Graham, secretary of the Scottish FA, said they would not go unless they won the British title"**

Oh the sulks and the subterfuges! Austria stood out because they alleged their team was too young, but by 1951 they had one of the strongest and most attractive sides in Europe. The French, who had virtually invented the World Cup, withdrew almost at the last moment. This, after actually being granted a reprieve since they had been eliminated in their qualifying group but invited to take part after the withdrawal of Turkey – this despite a 7-0 win against Syria in Ankara. But France had a point, when they complained of the huge distances which would be imposed on them.

Argentina, at odds with their Brazilian counterparts, sullenly stood aside. Hungary, preparing soon to astonish the world of football, lurked behind the Iron Curtain, as did the Russians. The French had been drawn in the same group as Uruguay and Bolivia and would have been forced to play Uruguay in Porto Alegre, nearer to Montevideo than Rio, then Bolivia, 200 miles away, four days later, at Recife. So in their qualifying group – the original intention to make this once more a knock-out competition rather than a group affair being abandoned – the Uruguayans had only feeble Bolivia to defeat, which they duly did, 8-0. Poor results in matches against Belgium (4-1) and Scotland (0-0) probably had much to do with the French decision.

Air travel had radically cut down the length of the journey from Europe to South America; it had taken 21 days to reach Montevideo in 1930. But the horrific Superga disaster the previous year, when Torino's plane crashed on the way back from Lisbon, killing over half the current Italy team, had left such a mark on Aldo Bardelli, the journalist made, surprisingly, team manager, that he and other players refused to fly. So Italy arrived by boat, a protracted journey which gave Bardelli and Ferruccio Novo, the president of Torino and the *Commissario Tecnico*, time to squabble. Eventually Bardelli was sidelined.

England's chances were reduced by the "treason", one might almost call it, of elegant Stoke City centre-half Neil Franklin, who duplicitously told the Football Association he did not wish to go to Brazil since his wife was pregnant. Instead of remaining at home he and the Stoke outside-right George Mountford surreptitiously flew to Colombia to play well-paid football in Bogota. Colombia was at the time out of FIFA and thus not subject to their jurisdiction.

Moreover, not for the first time, the England selectors outrageously neglected Stanley Matthews, the salient player of his time, greatest and most elusive of outside rights. Instead, they packed him off with a touring FA squad to North America, only to recall him, shortly before the World Cup.

All in vain

Almost unbelievably, the Scots spurned the chance to play in Brazil after they had so narrowly lost 1-0 to England at Hampden. George Graham, secretary of the Scottish FA, said they would only go if they won the British title. The England captain Billy Wright begged his Scottish equivalent George Young to plead with his officials, but it was all in vain.

George Raynor, the remarkable, ebullient little Yorkshireman who had won the 1948 Olympic title in London with his fine Swedish team, overcame the depredations of Italian and Spanish clubs, whisking away so many of his stars, to re-build the side and qualify comfortably for the World Cup finals. At first Raynor was looked at askance by the Swedish press – after all, his previous job had been as reserve trainer at Aldershot in Division Three – but he quickly

won them over with his tactical plan when Switzerland were overwhelmed. One suspects the hand of England's powerful FA Secretary, Stanley Rous, in Raynor's appointment. Rous had noted George's success with the Iraqi team during the war.

Raynor worked intensely with promising players all over Sweden, not least with Hans Jeppson, the centre-forward destined to torpedo Italy in Sao Paulo in the team's opening game, scoring twice and dominating that distinguished centre-back, Carlo Parola in a 3-2 win. Two gifted young inside-forwards, Kalle Palmer and Nacka Skoglund, also played their parts.

Doom and disaster

England weren't quite the same team as the one who beat Italy 4-0 in Turin in 1948 in the image of their celebrated inside-forwards, Stanley Mortensen and Wilf Mannion. They won somewhat laboriously, 2-0, against Chile in Rio, but doom and disaster awaited them in Belo Horizonte on a bumpy pitch, against the utterly unfancied United States.

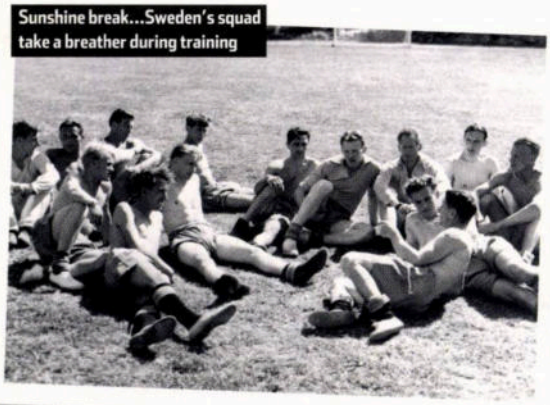
Uruguay had played Brazil three times in the recent Rio Branco Cup in Sao Paulo and Rio, winning the first game, losing the next two, each match decided by a one-goal margin. The previous year when there was a players' strike in Uruguay, they sent a team of amateurs to contest the South American Championship. It lost 5-1 to Brazil but now three splendid young members of that team would excel in the World Cup: inside-forwards Juan Schiaffino and Julio Perez, and right-winger Alcide Ghiggia. Ten years after his first cap, the massive and hugely effective roving centre-half and skipper, Obdulio Varela, was still imposingly there. Brazil and Uruguay were the only teams in the competition to eschew the "third back" game, sticking to an older pattern.

Brazil had prepared meticulously, almost monastically, under the intense aegis of their manager, Flavio Costa.

Classic finish...Juan Schiaffino (far left) beats Brazil keeper Barbosa for Uruguay's equaliser

"We ain't got a chance against your boys but we're gonna fight to keep down any cricket score"

USA coach Bill Jeffrey can't even imagine the dramatic events about to unfold against England in Belo Horizonte



Sunshine break...Sweden's squad take a breather during training

The squad was billeted in a large house just outside Rio, with married men forbidden to see their wives, a 10pm curfew rigidly imposed, as were vitamin drinks.

The newly-built, or partially-built, immense Maracana Stadium in Rio would be the venue for all but one of their games. With a capacity of 200,000 its completion was so threatened that the military were brought in to assist the workers. Yet on the occasion of the opening match – Brazil easily beat Mexico 4-0 with two goals from splendid striker Ademir – the situation, according to Stanley Matthews, was "sheer chaos". Endless traffic jams, crowds scurrying in over smashed scaffolding and rubble.

How ironic that when, in Brazil's third match, again at Maracana, the stadium's failings would play a large part in the defeat of Yugoslavia. As he prepared to take the field, the Yugoslav inside-right, Rajko Mitic, cut his head open on an exposed girder and thus, having to be bandaged, missed the opening minutes, in which Brazil took the lead, eventually winning 2-0. This, after Costa's team were held unexpectedly to a 2-2 draw by gallant Switzerland in Sao Paulo.

England's defeat by the USA must still count as one of the greatest shocks in any World Cup, or, indeed, in international football at large. The American team was essentially a job lot of players. Eddie McIlvenny, the right-half and captain, was a Scot who had been given a free transfer by Wrexham of the Third Division North, Maca the full-back, was a Belgian, Joe Gaetjens, the centre-forward who scored the sensational winning goal, was a Haitian, doomed, alas, to be murdered by the vicious *Tontons Macoutes*.

Native-born talent

Yet there was native-born talent in the team, not least in the clever left wing pair of John and Ed Souza, from Fall River, a largely Portuguese enclave which had been sticking to soccer for many years. John Souza was arguably one of the best inside-forwards in the competition while Pariani, the inside-right, was another able player. In their previous game, John Souza had put the USA ahead against Spain in an honourable 3-1 defeat.

The team was coached by an expatriate Scot, Bill Jeffery, who first worked on the US railroads, eventually coaching Penn State College, who for nine years, didn't lose a single match. "We ain't got a chance against your boys," said Jeffrey, "but we're gonna fight to keep down any cricket score."

England's team were the guests of a gold mine at Morro Vehlo, where 2,000 British workers were involved. Disdaining the stadium's facilities, the team changed in a local hotel. After the disastrous event the sole selector, Arthur Drewry, the FIFA president, was condemned for not choosing Matthews. But why should he? On the right wing was Tom Finney, a close rival to Matthews as one of the finest

wingers of his day. The excellent Bert Williams of Wolves was in goal, the exuberant Wright at wing-half, while Laurie Hughes was proving a more than adequate replacement for Franklin.

England couldn't score

Yet on the uneven pitch, England, for all their persistent pressure, couldn't score. Not Finney, not Mortensen, not gifted centre-forward Roy Bentley. And the Americans, who had already lost 1-0 in New York to a travel-lagged FA team, proceeded to score the only goal. In the 37th minute, America's left-half, Walter Bahr drove the ball into the six-yard area. Williams seemed to have it covered, but in dashed Gaetjens to head in. Some felt the ball merely and fortuitously hit him, but American sources have always averred he was known for scoring this kind of goal.

England were constantly defied by a splendid goalkeeper in Frank Borghi. John Sousa looked shrewder and more economical than his English counterparts. It did, once, look as if Jimmy Mullen's header had crossed the line, but when the ball was scrambled clear, the referee gave merely a corner.

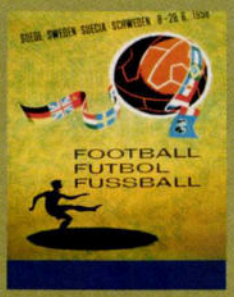
In later years England manager Winterbottom opined: "Everybody who saw the game would say that England didn't take its chances, hundreds of them, and when a team doesn't take its chances, it doesn't deserve to win." Jeffrey enthused: "This is all we need to make the game go in the States." Alas, the great American public barely took notice.

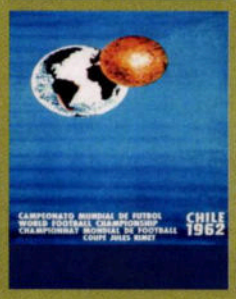
Making changes from a bizarrely selected team that lost to Sweden, Italy beat Paraguay 2-0 in Sao Paulo, but out they went. So to the so-called Final pool, involving the four group winners. And Brazil ran riot.

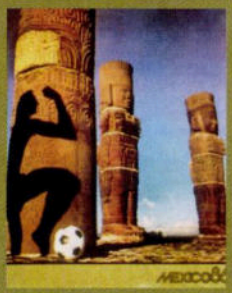
They were 7-1 conquerors of

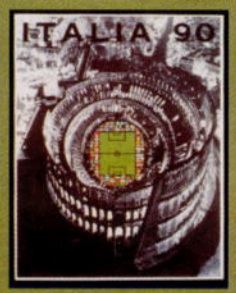
Picture this...

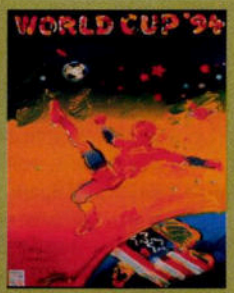
The official 1950 World Cup poster is part of a remarkable sequence of images











Champions elect...Uruguay pose for the cameras before the clash with Brazil

Our hero...Joe Gaetjens is chaired off by USA fans after his stunning winner against England

Sweden, 6-1 annihilators of Spain, each time at the Maracana. The now constituted inside-forward trio of Zizinho, Ademir and Jair played with irresistible pace, brilliance and thrust. Ademir scored four against Sweden, Jair twice against Spain. Sweden, in Sao Paulo, recovered sufficiently to beat Spain, who had narrowly won against England in their final pool match. This time, Matthews did indeed play, but Jackie Milburn's headed "goal" was ruled out and England were on their way home.

Glorious game

The idiocies of the tournament's structure now meant that in their final (not the Final) game, in Rio, Brazil needed only to draw with Uruguay. It was a glorious game, refereed impeccably by Englishman George Reader, with Uruguay initially holding out gallantly and resiliently against waves of Brazilian attacks. Roque Maspoli was phenomenal in goal, Varela a magisterial captain, Rodriguez Andrade, nephew of a 1930 World Cup winner, as resolute in defence. Quite how Maspoli managed to thwart Ademir, for once left alone in front of goal, was almost inexplicable.

"After the victories won by Brazil against Sweden and Spain," Varela would later say, "we gave up our plans to use a third-back method of defence and relied on the old tactics... our plan was to see that every Brazilian forward must beat at least two defenders before being able to shoot. We accomplished this, thanks to the acceleration, the timing of Andrade, who seemed to be everywhere... Without him, our counter measure would inevitably have failed." As, indeed, they would without Varela.

Soon after Maspoli's save from Ademir, the tide began significantly to turn – Uruguay began to counter attack. The lean, pale, wonderfully elusive and inventive inside-left, Juan Schiaffino, had Brazil's black keeper (a rarity then) Barbosa desperately reaching his shot. Jair promptly shot against a post, Maspoli frustrated Ademir and the supple Zizinho. But Uruguay were threatening sporadically. Suddenly and dangerously, Schiaffino came alive, with a dazzling solo through Brazil's defence, ending with a shot to test Barbosa. Next Varela himself surged upfield, with a drive which Barbosa saved.

But after just two minutes of the second half, Brazil at long last scored. Ademir and Zizinho drew Uruguay's defence to the left, switched the ball right, and the right-winger Friaca dashed in to make it 1-0.

But Brazil seemed, strangely, to have shot their bolt. Schiaffino launched Perez, whose fierce right footer had Barbosa flying across his goal to fingertip the ball away. Varela was now constantly driving upfield, Ademir began waving his arms to exhort his team-mates.

Then midway through the half, Varela trundled the ball into the Brazilian half and sent little Chico Ghiggia flying up the right. His cross found Schiaffino quite unmarked. Barbosa was beaten and Uruguay were level.

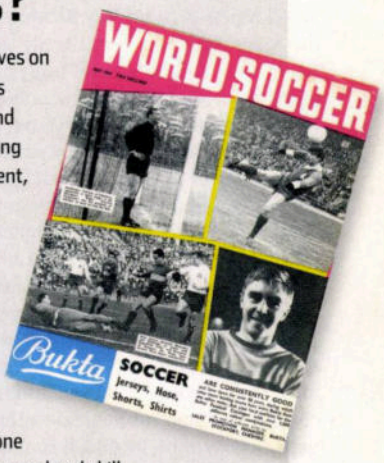
Varela now bestrode the field, a giant in every sense. With 11 minutes left, Ghiggia found Perez, who shook off Jair and returned the ball to Ghiggia, who cut in and beat Barbosa for the winner. Uruguay, after 30 years, were world champions again.

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

FROM THE ARCHIVES

MAY 1964

Still living on old memories?



"PROBABLY nobody lives on memories as much as Uruguay. Their Olympic and world titles, instead of giving them a spirit of improvement, proved to be a burden. Everybody is trying to emulate those great masters who won the laurels. Everybody is holding them up as examples at the time of playing; but few realise football has changed and one needs something more than zeal and skill. There was the attempt of one team, Penarol, to up the classic moulds. They contracted the top technician, Bela Guttman, but the intolerance and narrow-mindedness of directors, journalists and players wrecked the enterprise."

This paragraph, part of a general feature on South American soccer in *La Nacion* of Buenos Aires, aptly sums up the present slump in Uruguayan football. Since their great displays in the 1950 and 1954 World Championships, Uruguay's reputation as a world power has vanished. Elimination from the 1958 World Cup in the qualifying rounds was followed by an early departure in Chile [in 1962]; the 1959 South American Championship saw Uruguay in a disgraceful sixth place, while in 1963 they did not enter; their 1962 European tour could be likened to England's unhappy visit to the New World three years earlier; even Penarol's glorious victory in the Club Championship was tarnished by Real Madrid, who thrashed them in the World Final at Chamartin.

Almost all Uruguay have to show to their credit is an unbroken series of victories in the South American Youth Championships. Unfortunately, neither players nor tactics have blossomed in the harsh world of maturity.

TWELVE

Spotlight on Uruguay

WORLD SOCCER, May, 1964

by Roger Macdonald

"PROBABLY nobody lives on memories as much as Uruguay. Their Olympic and world titles, instead of giving them a spirit of improvement, proved to be a burden. Everybody is trying to emulate those great masters who won the laurels. Everybody is holding them up as examples at the time of playing; but few realise that football has changed and that one needs something more than zeal and skill. There was the attempt of one team, Penarol, to give up the classic moulds, and they contracted the top technician Bela Guttman, but the intolerance and narrow-mindedness of directors, journalists and players wrecked the enterprise."

This paragraph, part of a general feature on South American soccer in *La Nacion*, Buenos Aires, aptly sums up the present slump in Uruguayan football. Since their great displays in the 1950 and 1954 World Championships, Uruguay's reputation as a world power has vanished. Elimination from the 1958 World Cup in the qualifying rounds was followed by an early departure from the competition in Chile; the 1959 South American Championship saw Uruguay in a disgraceful sixth place, while in 1963 they did not enter; their 1962 European tour could be likened to England's unhappy visit to the New World three years earlier; even Penarol's glorious victory in the Club Championship was tarnished by Real Madrid, who thrashed them in the World Final at Chamartin.

The underlying cause of this series of disasters has been the gradual erosion of talent to Europe and Argentina. Penarol's Ghiggia, Schiaffino and Vidal went to Italy, to be followed by Nacional's Gomez after a brief flirtation with River Plate. With Real Madrid's capture in 1956 of another Nacional star, Santamaria, European interest dried, but Argentinian clubs lured Rodriguez, Aguilera, Andrade, Silveira, Basile, Donkaan, Acosta and Ambrois to Buenos Aires.

Stamina

Without these players, it is scarcely surprising that Uruguay's highly demanding tactical system of the "flying back" has lost its former efficacy. A line-up of GK-1-3-2-4 requires at least three footballers with exceptional intelligence, stamina and versatility, able to participate in both con-

April has not been announced at the time of writing, but it is expected to be drawn predominantly from Nacional and Penarol, and to include several who came on the last European tour.

The key players to Nacional's Championship team—apart from Brazilian centre-forward Hasrique—were sharpshooter

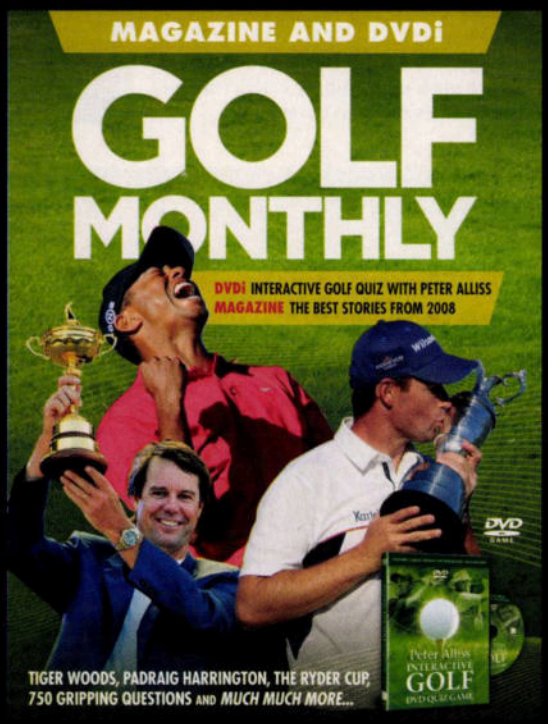
STILL LIVING ON OLD MEMORIES?

Uruguay—West Germany April 1962. Left to right: Sasia, Traglia, Santa, and the goalscorer Sasia. West Germany won 3-0 in Hamburg. (Keystone)

But the enlightenment of Nacional shows no sign of spreading to the national side.

Donkaan, Manicera, Sosa, Emilio Alvarez, Eliseo Alvarez, and the young winger Oyarbide. Eliseo Alvarez is not related to Emilio, who is darker skinned and the proud owner of a real moustache; but

THE BEST OF GOLF MONTHLY 2008



Interactive Quiz DVD

PLUS a collection of the

very best stories of 2008

from the UK's most widely

read golf magazine

Available at

WHSmith

From November 4th

TACTICS The guide to who plays how. Tim Vickery considers

No 11: SOUTH AMERICA

3-3-1-3 FORWARD THINKING

Coach Marcelo Bielsa believes that in a side looking to attack the conventional full back is wasted. He wants width higher up the field so goes with a back three (a back four against Uruguay's three strikers) and tries to squeeze play into the opponent's half, keep the rhythm fast and create two-against-one situations down the flanks to get behind the defence. Humberto Suazo interprets the centre forward role with flexibility, frequently dropping to combine with Matias Fernandez. Chile may be vulnerable to the counter-attack, but their bold approach means only Paraguay have won more games.

Flexible...Suazo

4-4-2 VERSATILITY IS THE KEY

Argentinian coach Gerardo Martino began his reign with a back three and the aim of forcing the team higher up the field. It ended badly in last year's Copa America, and since then he has been more pragmatic, with outstanding results, thanks to the flexibility of 4-4-2 and his players' versatility. When deep defence is called for, Dario Veron comes in at right-back, Claudio Morel Rodriguez is cautious at left, the two lines of four stay close together and the strikers play on the break. When looking to press the right-back is Carlos Bonet, and he and Rodriguez push up to supply early crosses, while Victor Caceres drops to cover.

Pragmatic...Martino

A TACTICAL HISTORY OF...Luis ARAGONES

Early ideas...Aragones deployed two sweepers in his counter-attacking Atletico Madrid side

1976-77 ATLETICO MADRID 1-3-1-3-2

The side he led to the 1977 Spanish League title often featured the unusual deployment of two sweepers: Brazilian Luis Pereira behind the back line and Marcelinho in front of it. Atletico were built to hit on the counter, always preferring to soak up pressure then launch spectacular breaks, generally led by Luis Pereira, Leal or Ruben Ayala.

1987-88 BARCELONA 4-2-2-2

Succeeding Terry Venables in the Barca hot-seat, he won the Spanish Cup but could do no better than a sixth-place finish in La Liga and suffered depression. The side was not short of aggression or attacking intent and he had no choice but to be more pro-active in his approach. Bernd Schuster ran the show, raiding left-back Julio Alberto and winger 'Lobo' Carrasco provided the width while Gary Lineker applied the finishing touch.

1995-96 VALENCIA 4-1-3-1-1

He reverted to safety-first, turning Valencia into a redoubtable counter-attacking side which came runners up in La Liga to Atletico Madrid. Virtually all their goals came from midfielders breaking forward. Fernando scored 10, while in the 'hole' Serb Predrag Mijatovic was a revelation, netting 28. Vicente Engonga held it all together while midfielders Enrique Romero or the young Gaizka Mendieta were often deployed at full-back.

4-2-3-1 ENIGMA VARIATIONS

Harnessing individual talent in a collective framework is an old headache for Brazil coaches, and for Dunga it is no different. At full strength he has chosen his three superstars operating behind a lone striker, but the three can get in each other's way, depriving the side of width. Recently, without Ronaldinho, Dunga went with a diamond midfield, Elano and Josue either side of Gilberto Silva, Kaka at the head breaking right, and Robinho on the left. Brazil have been devastating on the counter-attack, but inept at breaking teams down and better passing from central midfield is urgently needed.

Headache...Dunga

4-4-2 DIAMOND MIDFIELD

How to stop a patient passing game being stifled was the problem Alfio Basile faced as Argentina coach. He favoured 4-4-2 with a midfield diamond, but against packed defences it led to a lack of width, especially with no attacking left back. Basile tried 3-4-1-2, with Javier Zanetti moving to right wing back and Angel Di Maria or Jonas Gutierrez on the other flank, and 4-3-3, with Juan Roman Riquelme in front of two defensive midfielders and Lionel Messi, Sergio Aguero and Carlos Tevez in attack. Neither proved entirely convincing, and after one win in seven games Basile resigned. Now it is Diego Maradona's problem.

Playmaker...Riquelme

How the Spaniard's teams have changed down the years

2000-01 MALLORCA 4-1-2-3

His ability to produce a team adept at turning defence into attack was again apparent as he led the islanders to an unexpected third-place finish in La Liga. Marcos often helped Engonga in his traffic cop role; veteran left back Miguel Soler constantly advanced and Argentine playmaker Ariel Ibagaza roamed menacingly. Samuel Eto'o and Albert Luque combined intelligently, one working the channels, the other seeking space in the box.

2008 SPAIN 4-1-3-2

The crowing moment of his 35-year coaching career. The gifted team barely took a backward step on their way to the European crown, dominating with their exceptional passing and movement. Xavi shone in the engine room, while 'false wingers' Silva and Iniesta linked superbly with stellar strike-force Torres and Villa. Marcos Senna was so effective a minder the lack of pace in central defence was rarely exposed.

Just reward... Aragones' Spain team were outstanding at Euro 2008

Red-blooded skins...Al Ahly fans find their voices during the derby against Zamalek

Nile magic

Peterjon Cresswell takes a tour of the Egyptian capital, home to Africa's fiercest club rivalry

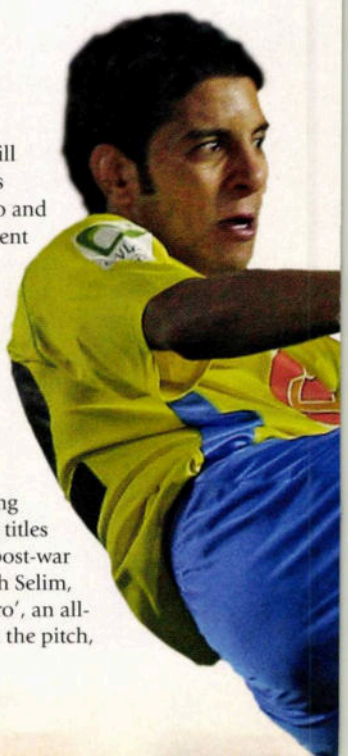
AS A SOCCER CITY, Cairo brings out the superlatives. Africa's largest city, boasting the continent's only metro system and second busiest airport, has hosted a record number of African Nations Cup finals and African Champions League Finals. The Egyptian capital, sadly overlooked for the recent 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, regularly supports half-a-dozen clubs in the Egyptian Premier League.

Most of all, Cairo is the home of Africa's most titled two clubs, who provide arguably the most potent derby in the global game: Al Ahly and Zamalek. The big two clash at least twice a year at Cairo's 74,000-capacity International Stadium, an event characterised by lines of riot police and regular skirmishes. Although the game is easier to control since both clubs moved from modest grounds to share the national arena, it still warrants a foreign referee and live TV coverage across the Arab world.

The rivalry reflects the convoluted politics of 20th-century Egypt.

Africa's top club

Al Ahly were officially named Africa's club of the century by FIFA in 2001 before they went on to win four more African Champions League titles, including a recent record sixth victory over Coton Sport Garoua of Cameroon. The Reds represented the Egyptian (and therefore Arab) struggle for independence against colonial rule – even though their first chairman a century ago was Englishman Mitchell Ince. Wearing the colours of the pre-colonial Egyptian flag, and fiercely sticking to a name meaning 'national' in Arabic, Al Ahly still attract working-class support across Cairo and the region. Subsequent chairmen and club officials were prominent Egyptians. As Egypt broke away from colonial rule after the Second World War, so Al Ahly dominated the domestic game, going on to win 33 league titles to date. The club's post-war figurehead was Saleh Selim, known as 'El Maestro', an all-conquering hero on the pitch,



> **"The rivalry between Al Ahly and Zamalek reflects the convoluted politics of 20th century Egypt"**

movie star, club manager and president for nearly two decades.

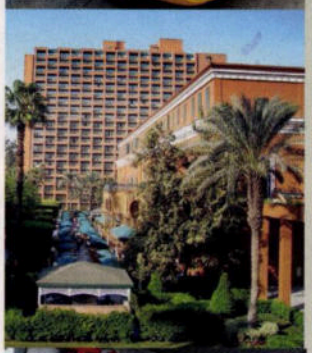
Major international success is a relatively recent phenomenon – the Reds first won Africa's major prize, the Champions League, in 1982, and have appeared in each of the last four Finals, winning three. Portuguese coach Manuel Jose is behind the current triumphs – other successful managers have included Hungarian Nandor Hidegkuti. Al Ahly were Don Revie's last, brief, posting as a manager. The current star is Angolan Flavio Amado, responsible for the key goals that brought the recent African Champions League title.

If Al Ahly has Flavio, then Zamalek had, until recently, Amr Zaki. This season's Premier League sensation in England, the bullish striker was scoring a goal every other game for the White Knights before being taken on loan at Wigan. It was Zaki who opened the scoring in the last great Cairo derby, the Cup Final of 2007, in which Al Ahly came from behind

City rivals...Al Ahly (red) and Ismaily (yellow) clash in one of many local derbies

SURVIVAL GUIDE

Pharoah city



● ARRIVAL & TRANSPORT

Cairo International Airport (+20 2 291 4255, www.cairo-airport.com) is 14 miles north-east of the city centre. A new metro line 3 is planned to extend there but until it does, you must reach town either by taxi (up to 60Egyptian£/£7) or bus 356 or minibus 27, both carrying a nominal fee. Although the city's many bus stations and main train hub of Ramses are served by various city buses, the easiest way to get around is either by the two-line metro or reliable yellow taxi cabs.

● HOTELS

A string of top hotels vie to outdo each for the provision of luxury – the Cairo Marriott (Sharia Saraya Al-Gezira 16, Zamalek, +20 2 735 8888, www.marriott.com, £E1,200/£145) is a conversion of a palace built for Napoleon's wife Eugenie. The Grand (26th July 17, +20 2 575 7801, £E300/£36) is considered a good mid-range option and the Garden City House (Sharia Kamal al-Din Salah, +20 2 354 4969, www.gardencityhouse.com, £E166/£20 the best budget choice.

● EATING & DRINKING

Egyptian food is generally healthy and delicious – grilled meats, fresh seafood with plenty of pulses and vegetables. For quality local fare, head for Sequoia (Abu el-Fida 3, +20 2 735 0014), a pricy, fashionable terrace grill overlooking the Nile. If you're on a budget, there's the moderately priced Felfela (Hoda Sharawi 15, +20 2 392 2751) in the downtown/Garden City area, or the cheaper and less fancy Arabica (El Marashly 20, +20 2 735 7982) in Zamalek, where you can just order a juice and a sandwich and check your emails with the WiFi. If budget allows, grab a sunset cocktail at Mojito (Corniche el Nil 1113, +20 2 578 0444), atop the Hilton Hotel, overlooking the Nile. For atmosphere, you can't do better than the lively After Eight (Kasr El Nil 6, +20 2 574 0855).

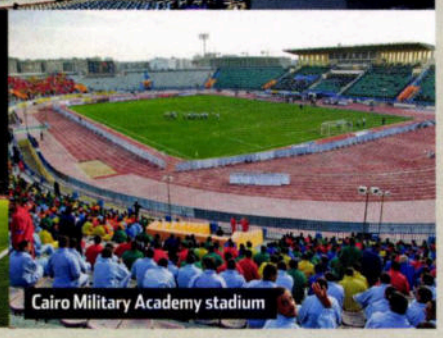
● DAYTIME ENTERTAINMENT

Whatever you do, you have to see the Pyramids, the world's oldest and most famous tourist sight. There are three main pyramids at the Giza site – Khufu, Khafre and Menkaura – with the Sphinx reclining near Khafre. Expect crowds and conmen – you don't need a camel or a guide to enter, just a general entrance ticket and one for each pyramid. In town, the vast Egyptian Museum (Midan Tahrir, +20 2 578 2448, www.egyptianmuseum.gov.eg) is a must, with Tutankhamen treasures and other mummies. There are markets for everything in Cairo: produce, clothes, paper, birds, livestock and camels. If you're just after some authentic souvenirs to take back, head for the Souk el Fustat, near Mar Girgis metro station, a real taste of old Cairo.

THE STADIUMS

Cairo International stadium

Osman Ahmed Osman stadium


Cairo Military Academy stadium

Track and field

When filled for the derby match, the Cairo International stadium (Sharia Youssef Abbas, Nasr City, +20 2 531 9671) is one of the game's great arenas – despite the running track and 1960s feel. When Zamalek's Ultras White Knights gather in the East Stand (known as the Curva Sud), Al Ahly's Ultras Ahlawy in the Curva Nord, you could be in Rio or Rome. The building echoes another time, inaugurated by President Nasser on National Day in July 1960, renovated for the African Nations Cup in 2006. Although it holds 74,000, it had 120,000 crammed into it for the Egypt-Cameroon Nations Cup Final in 1986. A taxi is the best way to reach it. Ask a local to search for tickets on the Arab-only websites (www.ahly.com; www.zamalek-sc.com).

Also set off the King Khaled motorway are Etisalat's Railway stadium (Sekka El Hadeed), holding 25,000, and the Osman Ahmed Osman stadium (capacity 35,000), hosting the Arab Contractors and ENPPI. Further east again is the Cairo Military Academy stadium, whose current capacity of 29,000 will be increased to 65,000 as part of a major 2009 rebuild. Top-flight teams Al-Shorta and Al-Gaish currently play there.

three times to beat their bitter rivals 4-3 after extra time. Current coach Reiner Hollmann can do little to stem the red tide – goals from Flavio saw Al Ahly sail past Zamalek in the quarter-final group stage of the Champions League this September.

It hasn't always been so grim. The Whites have ruled the roost at home and across Africa in certain spells, the mid 1980s, early 1990s and early 2000s, and no other club has won the Champions League more times – apart from, of course, Al Ahly.

Local expats, notably Belgians, founded Kasr El-Nil in 1911 as a rival to Al Ahly. Becoming El-Mokhtalat in 1913, the club was a place for foreigners to mingle and indulge in sport, with links to the British military. Renamed after corpulent kleptomaniac King Farouk in 1941, the club later settled on Zamalek, the name of the island in central Cairo near its current headquarters. Its heritage hardly suited the spirit of the era once Egypt began to assert its independence under President Nasser in the 1950s.

> **"Al Ahly appealed to nationalist sentiments while Zamalek attracted a more bourgeois, intellectual fan"**

Whereas Al Ahly appealed to basic nationalist sentiments, Zamalek attracted a more bourgeois, intellectual type of supporter. Matters came to a head around the time of the 1967 war with Israel. Al Ahly members were actively encouraged to assist the military although the club allegedly declined a request by the popular Ismaily for a groundshare arrangement – members of Egypt's third club were forced from their Suez Canal base by the conflict. Ever since, fans of Zamalek and Ismaily have shared a mutual hatred of the Reds.

Of Cairo's lesser clubs, Arab Contractors (Al-Mokawloon al-Arab) have the most pedigree, with one League title, three cups and three African Cup-winners Cups. Like the city's three main stadiums, they are based in Nasr City, the traffic-logged zone purpose-built in the 1960s, adjoining Heliopolis, east of the centre towards the airport. ●

Derby clash...Al Ahly take on Zamalek

More Soccer Cities at worldsoccer.com/travel

AMERICAN CHRISTMAS SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

SAVE UP TO 35%

when you subscribe to WorldSoccer®

It promises to be an exciting 12 months for World Soccer, with English dominances of the Champions League set to be challenged by Jose Mourinho's Internazionale and the return of Juventus and Bayern Munich. World Soccer will be there every step of the way, bringing you exclusive interviews with the game's biggest personalities and expert analysis of the most important stories.

GAVIN HAMILTON EDITOR

- **Be the first to get your copy of the world's only truly global soccer magazine!**
- **The Bible of international soccer** REUTERS

www.worldsoccersubs.com/if8p

HOTLINE 0044845 123 1231

LINES OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK, 8am-9pm UK TIME. **QUOTE CODE EBL8**

SEND COUPON TO: World Soccer Subscriptions, PO Box 272, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, UK, RH16 3FS (please attach correct postage)

YES I would like to subscribe to World Soccer

- ☐ **1 year - paying just $89.50 saving 31% (full price $129.74)**
- ☐ **2 years - paying just $168.60 saving 35% (full price $259.48)**
- ☐ **6 months - pay just $44.76 saving 31% (full price $64.87)**

PAYMENT DETAILS

I enclose a Cheque/postal order for $ _____ made payable to IPC Media Ltd.

Or please debit my: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Amex ☐ Maestro

Card No: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

☐☐☐ Maestro Expiry date: ☐☐ / ☐☐

☐☐ / ☐☐ Issue No./Valid from

Signature: Date:

(I am over 18)

YOUR DETAILS

CODE EBL8

Mrs/Ms/Miss/Mr Forename

Surname

Address

Post/Zipcode

Country/State

Home Tel (inc. country/area code)

If you would like to receive emails from IPC and World Soccer containing news, special offers and product and service information and take part in our magazine research via email, please include your email address.

Email

If you would like to receive text messages from IPC and World Soccer containing news, special offers and product and service information and take part in our magazine research via phone, please include your mobile phone number.

Mobile

Year of Birth Y Y Y Y

Final closing date for all orders is 1st February 2009. Orders received before the 9th December 2008 will begin with the February 2009 issue published in January. Orders received after 9th December 2008 will start with the first available issue. All prices are discounted from the full subscription rate advertised in each title, include P&P and are correct at time of going to press. Credit/debit card charges will be taken in sterling. If the magazine ordered changes frequency per annum, we will honour the number of issues paid for, not the term of the subscription. **For enquiries call: +44 (0)845 123 1231, or email: ipcsubs@quadrantsubs.co.uk.** World Soccer, published by IPC Media Ltd (IPC), will collect your personal information to process your order. World Soccer and IPC would like to contact you by post or telephone to promote and ask your opinion on our magazines and services. Please tick here if you prefer not to hear from us ☐. IPC may occasionally pass your details to carefully selected organisations so that they can contact you by telephone or post with regards to promoting and researching their products and services. Please tick here if you prefer not to be contacted ☐. IPC would like to email you with offers from carefully selected organisations and brands, promoting and researching their products and services. If you want to receive these messages please tick here ☐.

PRO-DIRECT
www.prodirectsoccer.com

www.prodirectsoccer.com
The World's Largest Online Football Store

NEW RELEASE
YOU BETTER BE QUICK

MERCURIAL
THE LIMITED EDITION
VAPOR IV BERRY

SPEED
Mercurial Talaria
Berry/White
PDS 002 009 186
£74.99
sizes 6 - 12 inc ½'s
CLUB

SPEED
Mercurial Vapor IV
Berry/White
PDS 002 009 185
£119.99
sizes 6 - 12 inc ½'s
PRO

NEW - adidas F50.9
FULL COLLECTION ONLINE

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
SPEED
F50.9 Tunit Pro-Lite
White/Red
Firm Ground - PDS 002 001 217
£99.99
sizes 6 - 12 inc ½'s
PRO

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
LEATHER
SPEED
F50.9 Tunit Pro-Lite
Black/Yellow - Leather
Soft Ground - PDS 002 001 213
£99.99
sizes 6 - 12 inc ½'s
PRO

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
SPEED
F50.9 Tunit Pro-Lite
Night Sky/Poppy Red
Hard Ground - PDS 002 001 212
£99.99
sizes 6 - 12 inc ½'s
PRO

NEW - adidas Predator
FULL COLLECTION ONLINE

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
POWER
Predator Power
White/Silver/Black
Soft Ground - PDS 002 001 200
£129.99
sizes 6 - 13 inc ½'s
PRO

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
POWER
Predator Swerve
Indigo/Silver/Pool
Firm Ground - PDS 002 001 204
£129.99
sizes 6 - 13 inc ½'s
PRO

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
POWER
Predator Fantasy
Orange/Blk/Silver
Firm Ground - PDS 002 001 205
£129.99
sizes 6 - 13 inc ½'s
PRO

NEW - Puma v1.08
FULL COLLECTION ONLINE

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
LEATHER
SPEED
v1.08 K Leather Black
Soft Ground - PDS 002 010 748
Firm Ground - PDS 002 010 749
£129.99
sizes 6 - 13 inc ½'s
PRO

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
SPEED
v1.08 Pink FG
Pink/Black/White
Firm Ground - PDS 002 010 751
£119.99
sizes 6 - 13 inc ½'s
PRO

PRO-DIRECT NEW RELEASE
SPEED
v1.08 The Bull FG
Blue/Red/Yellow/Silver
Firm Ground - PDS 002 010 750
£119.99
sizes 6 - 13 inc ½'s
PRO

Pro Boot Personalisation from only £19.95

adidas PUMA Patisport asics MIZUNO RBK DIADORA Pantofola d'Oro

FOR SALE

AddColour.AddStyle.AddSoul.AddCanvas

New Legends collection
Say Goodnight to the Bad Guy 1/250

10% Off
for readers of World Soccer
Enter code WS5075 when checking out

thecanvaslounge.co.uk
Limited edition art on canvas & Perspex

Tel 0845 3005072 Email info@thecanvaslounge.co.uk
Buy contemporary art at www.thecanvaslounge.co.uk

your HEROES & LEGENDS

Match worn memorabilia
www.footballmatchshirts.co.uk
for the connoisseur collector

CLOBBER UNIQUE!

CHOOSE OR TELL US THE PLAYERS YOU WANT, AND WE'LL MAKE THE T-SHIRTS. THE WORDING IS UP TO YOU!

Cult Zeros is a bit of fun. There is no place for bigotry, sectarianism, racism, sexism, hatefulness (or cussing of Fulham players!!!). Cult Zeros have the right to refuse to do requests they believe inappropriate. Cheers!

www.cultzeros.co.uk

FASHION

For a copy of our *free* catalogue, please call our sales line on 020 8553 0054

Web: www.sportingkicks.co.uk Email: info@sportingkicks.co.uk

MISCELLANEOUS

FOOTBALL HEAVEN

For all kinds of football souvenirs & memorabilia

Badges, books, pennants, shirts, videos and **flags and scarves for all 32 2006 World Cup teams in stock.**

Over 500 different football books, many out of print. Over 700 different football videos, many deleted.

Over 2,200 different football badges from around the world and much more.

Flags and badges for World Cup 2006.

www.footballheaven.net
email: info@footballheaven.net
Phone: (44) 01464 821333
Fax: (44) 01464 821330

WANTED

Tour Couriers Wanted!!

Established UK-based Sports Tour Company (19 years) needs either:

a) UK-based people with a background in sport and fluent language ability in either French, Dutch, German, Danish, Spanish or Italian, OR

b) Fluent English-speaking nationals of these countries, to look after sports tours groups coming to Europe at holiday periods in 2009.

Good rates of pay, high standard of lodging and meals, exciting and stimulating locations. Most sports covered.

If you feel you have what it takes for these part-time positions send your CV or queries to:
tourmanager@live.co.uk

PROGRAMMES

PROGRAMME PROMOTIONS

VISIT THE ESSENTIAL WEBSITE FOR PROGRAMME COLLECTORS

www.footballprogrammes.com

which includes an up to date listing of our stock, pre-war to date

No internet access ? No problem!

Clients who have never sent before, forward your name and address to:

P.O. BOX 209, Hounslow, Middx TW3 4DF

For a free copy of our next bi-monthly

MAIL ORDER CATALOGUE

If you have been on our database previously please send 5 x 1st class stamps towards costs.

FOOTBALL PROGRAMME COLLECTIONS ALWAYS WANTED ! Tel: 01923 680988

FREE PROGRAMME CATALOGUE

To receive a **FREE** copy of our latest catalogue (listing several thousand different mint condition Big Match and League teams programmes etc.) please send your name and address to:

STEVE EARL FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES (WS)
BROAD ST., BUNGAY, SUFFOLK NR35 1AH

or phone **01986 892621** or visit **www.footballprogs.co.uk**

(Big Match Programmes also purchased)

Michael Hewitt Programmes

For our introductory catalogue covering all aspects of football collecting:
PROGRAMMES/MATCH TICKETS/BADGES/MEMORABILIA
just send your full address.
"Overseas: 1st Catalogue free. UK: Send 60p"
LARGE EUROPEAN/WORLD CUP AND INTERNATIONAL SECTIONS.
WE BUY OR EXCHANGE FROM ALL COUNTRIES – CARRIAGE PAID.
All major CREDIT and DEBIT cards accepted.

20 Suzanne Crescent, South Elmsall, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF9 2BB.
Telephone: 01977 643107
Fax: 01977 648655
E-mail: HEWITTPROG@aol.com

COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF PROGRAMMES INCLUDING A GOOD SELECTION OF EUROPEAN

We are always interested in purchasing collectors especially older items.

Please send 50p for our latest catalogue to:

KATH and PETE,
Rundo Football Programmes, 4 Crawford Avenue, Gauldry, Newport-On-Tay, DD6 8SG. Tel: 01382 330356
Peter@rundo.fsbusiness.co.uk www.KathPeterrundo.co.uk

VIDEO/CINE FILMS

Soccer Matches on DVD 1958-2007

World Cups, Euro Champs, Euro Cups, Copa America, Maradona, Pele, Cruyff, Brazil, Milan, Juventus, Barcelona, Souther America, Europe, Asia.

Email for 1,500 Games List

sammi271@btinternet.com

Soccer Classics, Flat 1, 54A Coronation Street, Blackpool FY1 4PD

www.RareSoccerVideos.com

Thousands of old games from the past

Watch the outstanding players and the best teams

Pele Maradonna Beckenbauer Cruyff and others

Relive the memories of those great games

vhs-pal, vhs-ntsc, dvd, world wide shipping
www.RareSoccerVideos.com

VIDEO/CINE FILMS

Pro Soccer PBM

Quick, easy PBM for all ages running since 1989 via post or email. Up to date squads for Britain, Europe and South America.

Send your details for FREE START UP at **www.olympiapbm.co.uk**

6 Sandy Lane, Bramcote, Nottingham NG9 3GS England
Fax: 0115 943 6197

To advertise in WorldSoccer Classified call Simon Ellis on 020 3148 2822

FOOTBALL KITS

WorldSoccer

Sign up for FREE!

Win cash prizes up to £500

footi.net

THE RIGHT RESULT FOR YOUR CLUB!

1 CHOOSE A CAMPAIGN

2 FOLLOW A CLUB

3 PICK THEIR SCORES

Choose clubs from the top leagues and guess their scores over 5 matches. Amass the most points throughout the season and win cash prizes.

Play online at www.footi.net

Netted Ltd

Over 18s only

www.footi.net

WORLD SERVICE

THE ULTIMATE GLOBAL NEWS AND RESULTS DIGEST

No pain, no gain...Porto's Fucile feels the force of a Roberto Carlos tackle in the Champions League group game against Fenerbahce in Istanbul. Fucile had the last laugh, though, as Porto won 2-1 to reach the last 16 knockout stage

FRANCE

Les Verts feeling blue

SAINT-ETIENNE'S AGONY just goes on and on. While their fierce local rivals Lyon continue to set standards under Claude Puel, *Les Verts* are in ever more dire straits.

By the end of November Lyon had a five-point advantage over second-placed Nice, and with qualification from the Champions League group stages assured following a delightful away win at Fiorentina, it's happy days at the Stade Gerland.

Just 60 kilometres south-west, however, it is a totally different story. Once the aristocrats of French football, Saint-Etienne currently find themselves bottom of the Ligue 1 pile, 23 points behind Lyon and without a single point to show for their efforts in their last seven league games.

Inevitably manager Laurent Roussey – a former Saint-Etienne player – paid the price for an abysmal record of nine losses in 13 league outings and was sacked early in November. Co-presidents Bernard Caiazzo and Roland Romeyer acted decisively in bringing in technical director Damien Comolli, recently ousted from Tottenham, and former Lyon coach Alain Perrin. But the new team couldn't stop the rot and a heavy 3-0 defeat at Lille was followed by a 1-0 loss at home to Nice.

To be fair to former Portsmouth boss Perrin, he has not only inherited a side low on confidence, but one also low on numbers. With five regular first-teamers injured and two suspended for the match against Nice it was always going to be an uphill struggle.

No doubt we will have a better idea of how Perrin and his perennial assistant Christophe Galtier are going to shape up once they have a few matches under their belts and once the January transfer market has been played out.

Saint-Etienne are far from doomed at this stage of the season, of course. Things are so tight down at the bottom of France's top flight that just two points separate the bottom five clubs. But given that *Les Verts* supporters still dream of the glory days of the late 1970s, when they were a big noise not only in France but right across Europe, a relegation dogfight simply is not good enough.

Naturally inside the Stade Geoffroy-Guichard – nicknamed *Le Chaudron* (The Cauldron) – things are hotting up. Banners were inevitably unfurled during the Nice match, including one which read: "If the directors won't run the club for love, not profit, then they should resign". A little flowery, maybe, but it left no-one in any doubt that the management are under pressure.

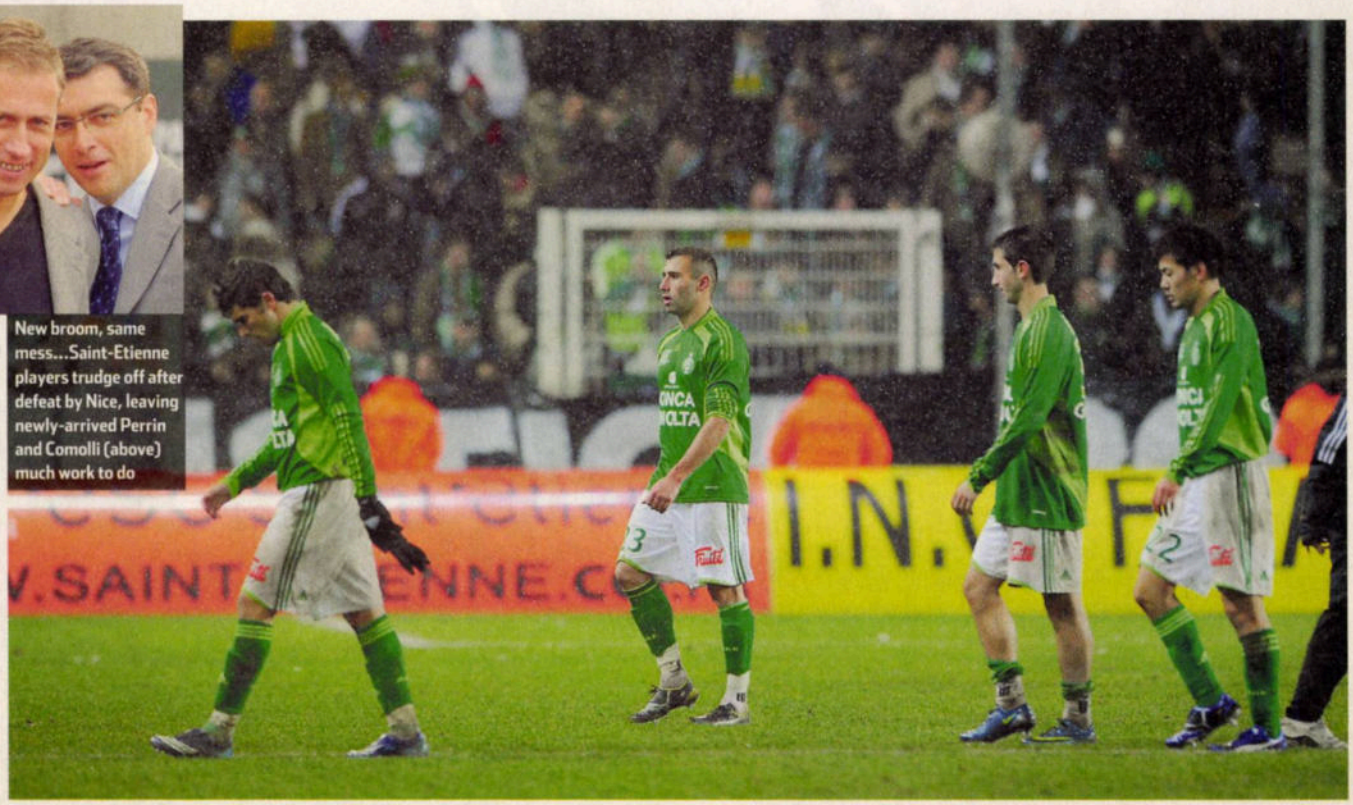
Is Perrin the man for the job? As you would expect he is talking a good game after the Roussey era, during which there were a number of personal spats between players and manager. "The slate is wiped clean. I've got no preconceived ideas about anyone," he said. Whether the fans have preconceived ideas about Perrin, who never really convinced in the post at Lyon despite winning the league last season, remains to be seen.

Elsewhere it is pretty much business as usual, with the notable exception of Nice, who might well have a collective nosebleed having reached the giddy heights of second spot after 15 matches, and Toulouse, who have put last season's relegation dogfight behind them and sit in a comfortable seventh place.

Meanwhile, those who have enjoyed the comedy that was Paris Saint-Germain these last few seasons will be disappointed to hear that Ludovic Giuly and Claude Makelele have steadied the ship admirably and the capital club currently sit in a very comfortable sixth place, in no small part thanks to the goals of gangly former Le Havre striker Guillaume Hoarau.

The only black spot on PSG's horizon has been the arrest of Benin-born midfielder Stephane Sessegnon for being over the limit behind the wheel and for driving without a valid French licence.

Howard Johnson



New broom, same mess...Saint-Etienne players trudge off after defeat by Nice, leaving newly-arrived Perrin and Comolli (above) much work to do

Comedy of errors...Keeper Rene Adler is stranded on deck and the German defence all over the place as Matthew Upson (centre) gives England the lead in Berlin

GERMANY

Cupboard looks bare

ENGLAND'S FULLY DESERVED 2-1 friendly victory over Germany in Berlin, effectively a clash of the B teams, would have led home boss Joachim Low to two conclusions.

Firstly, Bastian Schweinsteiger is not yet ready to assume the mantle of midfield general. Point two, if key men are not fit and firing – skipper Michael Ballack and full-back Philipp Lahm pulled out through injury, while Bayern Munich strikers Miroslav Klose and Lukas Podolski took part even though clearly out of touch – there are not enough alternatives in the cupboard to stay competitive.

England's second-stringers rose to the occasion. Germany's new generation for the most part floundered. Hoffenheim's Marvin Compper, inexplicably played at left-back rather than his preferred stopper role, was run ragged by Shaun Wright-Phillips; keeper Rene Adler flapped at a cross to gift England's opening goal to Matthew Upson and in central midfield neither Simon Rolfes and Jermaine Jones filled the boots of dropped veteran Torsten Frings, combining imprecise passing with little physical presence.

Arguably the one bright note of a depressing evening was the performance of substitute keeper, Werder Bremen's Tim Wiese, who replaced Adler at half-time and enhanced his reputation with some fine stops, particularly the Wright-Phillips shot he tipped on to a post.

There is no need for Low to panic. The England game had only pride at stake and his team are unbeaten at the top of their World Cup 2010 qualifying group. But if he was hoping to widen his personnel options, the exercise failed.

Germany badly missed the class and authority of Ballack in the middle of the field and Low must be thankful he did not listen to the large swathes of public opinion who wanted the captain sacked for lambasting the *Bundestrainer* in a press interview for allegedly not respecting the squad's old guard. The spat was settled during a two-hour clear the air meeting in Frankfurt, the pair agreeing to remain in harness, at least until the next World Cup.

"I was not in order to go public," said Ballack. "I regret giving the impression I wanted to criticise Joachim Low as head coach. For that, I have apologised." Low's response was conciliatory yet firm: "Michael Ballack continues as captain. However, he must adhere to our rules of conduct. He knows he can speak about anything internally. All decisions are taken by the coaching team and I made this perfectly clear to him."

VfB Stuttgart's Armin Veh became the second Bundesliga coach to be sacked this season, following Jos Luhukay, who was fired by Monchengladbach in early October and replaced by Hans Meyer. In charge of the Stuttgarter since February 2006, Veh's fate was sealed by an embarrassing 4-1 defeat at Wolfsburg, his team's fifth match without a win and their sixth defeat of a dismal campaign.

Veh earned lashings of praise for steering a young and relatively inexperienced Stuttgart to a sensational League title in 2006-07 but since then it has been all downhill. A string of new signings have flopped (Ciprian Marica, Yildiray Basturk, Khalid Boulahrouz and many others), young guns such as Robert Hilbert and Sami Khedira have stagnated and last season brought five defeats out of six in the Champions League and a sixth-place Bundesliga finish.

Team manager Horst Heldt said: "It was no easy decision but we had reached the point where we needed a change of direction."

Former Germany defender Markus Babbel, who has been working with the reserves, has been appointed caretaker.

Nick Bidwell

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

Stars in stripes...Surprise league leaders Leixoes celebrate a goal against Sporting Lisbon

PORTUGAL

Leixoes leap to the top

LEIXOES SPORT CLUB continued to defy the odds and held on to the league lead thanks to back-to-back away wins over Sporting Lisbon and Rio Ave in November. The Northerners maintained their perfect record on their travels with five victories in as many matches, including an earlier 3-2 triumph over champions FC Porto at the Dragao.

It's a start that has been as spectacular as unpredictable for a club which is in the top flight for only the second time in the last 20 years. Manager Jose Mota, who had already worked his magic at Pacos Ferreira, leading them to their first UEFA Cup appearance, could conceivably guide Leixoes to the Champions League for the first time. It's still early days but Mota's side has shown tremendous resilience by beating Sporting and FC Porto and drawing with Benfica. Mota's star performer has been Brazilian forward Wesley, who led the scoring charts with six goals from nine games.

The only club to keep up with the early pacesetters were Benfica, who maintained their undefeated league record through November. The Eagles won four consecutive games to climb to second place, underlining their title credentials. Even without the injured Pablo Aimar, manager Quique Sanchez Flores has been able to supply star Paraguayan striker Oscar Cardozo with enough chances to record five goals so far.

Two consecutive defeats left defending champions FC Porto wondering whether they had the necessary weapons to challenge for a fourth consecutive title. Jesualdo Ferreira's side continued to struggle for consistency and their qualification for the knock-out stages of the Champions League was a silver lining.

Sporting made club history by reaching the last 16 of Europe's top club competition for the first time.

Pedro Pinto

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Bohs do the double

Bohemians have won the League-Cup double for only the third time in the club's 118-year history. The Gypsies made history by winning the first Cup Final decided by a penalty shoot-out.

The Eircom League champions had drawn 2-2 with Derry City at the RDS after extra time. In the shoot-out goalkeeper Brian Murphy was Bohs' hero with two saves and then Lithuania striker Mindugas Kalonas blasted home the decisive kick to complete the double.

Sligo Rovers benefited from the decision to deduct 10 points from Cork City and Drogheda United, who both went into receivership. Sligo came with a late run to clinch fourth spot and a place in the Europa League (UEFA Cup) next season.

UCD, Cobh Ramblers and Finn Harps were relegated with only one club, Dundalk, promoted, to give a 10-club top flight next season.

Cork City bounced back from receivership to beat Glentoran in the final of the All-Ireland Setanta Sports Cup Final.

St Patrick's Athletic suspended midfielder Gary Dempsey after he admitted placing a 20 euro (£16) bet on his team to lose a league game to Galway United. Dempsey was not in the squad for the game which Pat's lost. But his wager didn't come up trumps as the second leg of his double, Man City to beat Bolton, didn't materialise.

Sean Creedon

SWITZERLAND

Derdiyok eyes Leverkusen

In-form Basle striker Eren Derdiyok is hoping for a move to the Bundesliga during the winter break, with Bayer Leverkusen his preferred destination.

Derdiyok, 20, hit a hat-trick for the defending Swiss double winners as they overran second division Thun 4-0 in the quarter-finals of the Cup.

Capped six times by Switzerland, Derdiyok says he has turned down approaches from English Premier League clubs, among others.

"My preference is for the Bundesliga," he said. "According to my agent negotiations for me to join Bayer Leverkusen in the winter are at a very advanced stage."

Ivar von Rulach

AUSTRIA

Foda wanted by Stuttgart

Sturm Graz coach Franco Foda is the favourite to fill the vacant post at Stuttgart. The German, who has led the young Graz side to domestic league heights, was being tipped to succeed Armin Veh as Stuttgart's new coach.

The 42-year-old former defender, who has a contract with Graz until 2010, played a key role in attracting Stuttgart's current sporting director Horst Heldt to Sturm as a player in 2001.

Harry Miltner

LIECHTENSTEIN

Littbarski in at Vaduz

Vaduz have sensationally sacked promotion-winning coach Heinz Hermann and replaced him with former German World Cup-winner Pierre Littbarski, whose last club was Saipa Tehran. Littbarski has been given the joint function of coach and sport director and has a contract until June 2010. His assistant will be former Duisburg coach Robert Jaspert.

Graeme Crawford

Beerschot calling...Anthuenis

BELGIUM

Aime back as boss

AIME ANTHUENIS, who insisted after leaving Lokeren that his days of coaching were over at the age of 64, has backtracked by returning to the fray with Germinal Beerschot.

The former national team and Anderlecht coach answered the call of Beerschot, with whom he had a previous spell as technical director, when they parted company with Harm Van Veldhoven. "I didn't have to think long about it," said Anthuenis.

Van Veldhoven, the third coach this season to lose his job in the Jupiler League, was the chief victim of the humiliating 4-1 home defeat in the Belgian Cup by the third division Racing Mechelen. With only eight points from the first 11 league games, Beerschot also faced a relegation battle. Van Veldhoven departed, complaining he no longer had the support of the players or management. But within a week he was back at work, with Dutch club Roda JC.

The days of two-horse title races between Anderlecht and Club Brugge seem to be over, temporarily at least, since Standard Liege have retained the form that won the title last season. Although slipping up at home for the fourth year running to Charleroi, they remain in contention and are enjoying belated success in the UEFA Cup.

Moussa Maazou Ouwo's 10th goal of the season for Lokeren in a 2-0 win at Beerschot took him to the top of the scoring charts.

Nicholas Harling

HOLLAND

PSV problems mount

WITH ONLY a third of the season gone, PSV, champions for the past four seasons, are off the pace in the title race and have already been knocked out of the cup.

New coach Huub Stevens has clashed with several players and general director Jan Reker may be ruing his summer decision to break ties with influential agent Vlade Lemic and appoint Stevens, a close friend.

The changes prompted the departures of super scout Piet De Visser, technical director Stan Valckx and keeper Heurelho Gomes. But so far the moves have backfired. PSV suffered four consecutive defeats in November, the latest a 4-1 loss to Ajax.

Stevens has fallen out with Serbian striker Danko Lazovic, who has lost out to Danny Koevermans in PSV's 4-5-1 lone-striker formation. Mexican Carlos Salcido, a key central defender last year, has also been unhappy at being moved from right to left back and back again during matches. Ecuadorian Edison Mendez also clashed with the coach on the training ground, TV cameras catching Stevens telling him: "You are showing me no respect" and "now you have a problem".

To make things worse PSV were knocked out of the cup by AZ Alkmaar, David Mendes Da Silva scoring the only goal in extra time.

AZ and NAC Breda still lead the way in the league. AZ had a disastrous start to the campaign and many thought coach Louis Van Gaal's days were numbered. However, his team have regained the form which took them to the brink of the title two years ago.

NAC finished third last year but missed a European ticket during the play-offs. When coach Ernie Brandts didn't renew his contract most people expected a downturn but successor Robert Maaskant is building on last season and playing a more attacking game.

Harm Van Veldhoven, a Dutchman who has spent his career in Belgium, has succeeded the sacked Raymond Atteveld at Roda JC, who are negotiating with Fortuna Sittard about a possible merger.

Utrecht goalkeeper Michel Vorm made a second-half debut as the national team beat Sweden 3-1.

Klaas-Jan Droppert

No end to it...Ajax's Luis Suarez scores against PSV

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

NORWAY

Vanquished by Valerenga

VALERENGA DENIED Stabaek the Double by surprisingly trouncing the newly-crowned league champions 4-1 in one of the best Norwegian Cup Finals of modern times.

Player-manager Martin Andersen salvaged some pride after his team finished a disappointing 10th in the league in his first season in charge. On cup final day Valerenga made favourites Stabaek look decidedly average.

The find of the season, Mohammed 'Moa' Abdellaoue, scored two brilliant goals and led a forward line that cut the Stabaek defence to pieces. Strike partner Daniel Fredheim Holm stepped out of the shadows, scoring twice as well. While Johan Andersson's goal gave the Stabaek fans some hope at 3-1, Valerenga put themselves out of reach less than a minute later.

Fredheim Holm said afterwards: "It was a relief that we finally were able to play this kind of football after a disappointing league season."

Stabaek coach Jan Jonsson refused to blame a league triumph hangover, saying: "Today Valerenga were the better team and I congratulate them." Swede Jonsson's words were typical of the gentlemanly behaviour which, as well as his coaching skills, has earned him acclaim in Norwegian football.

The same cannot be said for Aage Hareide's national team, who completed a nightmare season by losing 1-0 to Ukraine in Dnepropretrovsk. Latvian referee Romans Lajuks did Norway few favours but the side were generally outplayed and struggled with 10 men for most of the second half after John Arne Riise was sent off for dissent.

Sigurd Odegaard

You can't catch me...Valerenga's two-goal hero Mohammed Abdellaoue leaves Morten Morisbak of Stabaek floundering in the Cup Final

ICELAND

Maltese stars

The national side ended 2008 on a positive note with a well-worked 1-0 win against Malta in Valletta.

Olafur Johannesson's largely experimental side won with a goal from Bolton's Heidar Helguson to set the seal on a year that has seen them erase the misery of the European Championship qualifying campaign.

Five wins, two draws and five defeats from 12 matches this year is Iceland's best sequence since 2003 and in the light of their current World Cup qualifying campaign, the position looks even brighter. They trail Scotland on goal difference to occupy third place in Group 9, their four points from four matches representing Iceland's best position in international competition since the Euro 2000 qualifiers.

Rab Christie

NORTHERN IRELAND

Linfield beware

With the new-look Premiership over the halfway stage before the 12-team league splits into a top and bottom six, the championship race was wide open.

Linfield, winners for the last three seasons, continue to suffer from hiccups against "lesser lights", the latest an embarrassing 4-2 home defeat by second from bottom Glenavon.

Linfield are still favourites but Belfast rivals Glentoran and Crusaders swap top spot with the Blues week by week, and Coleraine and Lisburn Distillery are also in the mix.

National team manager Nigel Worthington didn't mince words after a lifeless 2-0 home friendly defeat by Hungary. He said: "If we play like that in our next World Cup match in San Marino in February, it will spell the end of our hopes of qualifying."

Roy Kitson

ESTONIA

Betting scandal pair banned

Levadia Tallinn's third successive championship title was overshadowed by a national betting scandal.

Four days after the end of the season, the FA disclosed the first two names to face punishment as a result of the scandal. Midfielder Artur Ossipov of Maag Tammeka Tartu was banned for three years and TVMK's former national team striker Vladislav Gussev two years for trying to influence the results of other matches. Nearly 30 other figures in the domestic game also face investigation.

Levadia, meanwhile, gained their sixth title after a 1-0 victory over Trans in Narva, which prompted ex-national team defender Marek Lemsalu to bow out at the top. The 35-year-old won seven titles (three with Levadia, four with Flora), and was capped 86 times.

● Metalurgs pipped Skonto Riga to second place in Latvia behind champions Ventspils.

Andres Must

WALES

Youth gamble pays off

A fine 1-0 win in Denmark closed off a respectable year for national boss John Toshack. His side, with an average age of under 22, produced a performance that bodes well, especially with talent also developing at Under-21 level.

Manager Tomi Morgan was sacked by Technogroup Welshpool after an injury-plagued start to the season and Port Talbot dismissed Nicky Tucker.

Caernarfon's woes continue, having been deducted three points for fielding an ineligible player, leaving them rooted firmly at the bottom. The club has also been put up for sale.

Mel Thomas

Oh yes...AaB hail the winner against Celtic

DENMARK

AaB's Euro milestone

THE BEST year in AaB Aalborg's history ended with another milestone – becoming the first Danish side to qualify for the latter stages of the UEFA Cup through a Champions League group.

It may not sound much to the big boys of European football, but that represents significant progress for the Danish Superliga. It came courtesy of a 2-1 victory at home to Celtic and was reward for the adventurous football played under former boss Bruce Rioch and caretaker coach Allan Kuhn.

Kuhn's work also lifted reigning champions AaB out of the relegation zone. Of course, that didn't prevent speculation he would fail to win a permanent job. Informed rumours in Sweden insisted it was set to be offered to 32-year-old Magnus Pehrsson, manager of Gothenburg-based GAIS.

OB Odense, another of Rioch's former clubs, topped the table with 35 points from 15 rounds and just ahead of FC Copenhagen and Brondby in what could proved the tightest and best title race for some time.

FC Copenhagen are still hoping to follow AaB into the UEFA Cup round of 32. They lost their opening group match at home to St Etienne, but a battling 1-1 draw in Valencia kept their hopes alive.

Jim Holden

SCOTLAND

Maradona milks the acclaim

MARADONA mania swept Scotland in November as the Argentinian arrived in Glasgow to take charge of his first game as his country's national coach at Hampden.

It was a return to the ground where he scored his first goal for Argentina 29 years earlier and for Scottish fans the chance to hail the hero they adopted after his 'Hand of God' downed 'Auld Enemy' England in 1986.

Maradona was happy to milk the adulation. "I go to a country where I am worshipped," he said. "They tell me that everywhere I go there is a Scot not far away."

No love lost...Maradona and Butcher avoid contact at Hampden

Not everyone in the Scottish camp was so enthusiastic. Former England captain Terry Butcher, who played in that 1986 game and is now assistant to Scotland manager George Burley, said he would refuse to shake Maradona's hand. When told about the snub, Maradona twisted the knife again, asking, "Who is Butcher?" at a press conference. The game itself proved less entertaining. Argentina won it 1-0 with an early goal from Maxi Rodriguez.

Celtic's interest in Europe came to an end with a game to spare, after a 2-1 defeat away to Danish champions Aalborg. It guaranteed them a last place finish, and not even the consolation of a parachute drop into the UEFA Cup.

The winner – a late own goal from defender Stephen Caldwell – was an embarrassing finale to an abysmal Champions League campaign. And the result meant that this is officially Scotland's worst-ever season in Europe, with all five of its representatives – Celtic, Rangers, Motherwell, Queen of the South and Hibernian – out before the end of November, and no victories in 13 games. Scotland are now 32nd in UEFA's coefficient table, behind the likes of Cyprus and Bosnia.

Dan Brennan

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

GREECE

Bajevic mending fences at AEK

Pointing the way forwards...Bajevic is in his third spell in charge of AEK

SORRY DOESN'T seem to be the hardest word for Dusan Bajevic after AEK Athens hired the 60-year-old Serb for a third time in mid-November to help pull the squad through a crisis.

Bajevic's first words at the media conference announcing his appointment were to apologise "to all those I have hurt all these years".

Bajevic, who signed a two-and-half-year contract, played for the club and served a number of successful years as coach. But hardcore fans cannot forgive him for abandoning the team in 1996 to take up the post at arch-rivals Olympiakos, and this after promising that he would stay.

At least he seemed to have mended some fences, since at his first training session Bajevic was cheered by about 300 supporters, and only one stood up and called him a traitor. "Let's all work together to place AEK high where this club belongs. We have to forget the bad past and look towards the future of the team," Bajevic said.

AEK have been a shambles lately with popular president and former star striker Demis Nikolaidis stepping down.

Bajevic, who resigned from Aris Salonika just before the start of the season, replaces Georgios Donis, who was fired by AEK the previous week.

But for all his enthusiasm at returning to his old stamping ground, Bajevic's chances of mounting a serious challenge to league leaders Olympiakos – AEK were 10 points behind in fifth place – look slim and his best hopes appear to be in the Greek Cup, in which AEK are through to the last 16.

Bajevic led AEK to four league titles and a Greek Cup during his first spell in charge which lasted eight years and then returned to the club in 2003 for 20 months. He has also coached Olympiakos and Red Star Belgrade.

Lou Economopoulos

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

TURKEY

All over for Fenerbahce

A goalless draw in London with Arsenal had given Fenerbahce fans belief that their team could survive in the Champions League. But a 2-1 home defeat by FC Porto dashed those hopes.

A packed Kadikoy stadium was festooned with banners reading, "Never give up the fight" and "It's not over". But two Porto goals in five minutes secured them a place in the knockout stages and left Fenerbahce, quarter-finalists last season, needing a win in their final group game to secure a 'consolation' place in the UEFA Cup.

Coach Luis Aragones came under fire, but the fans turned most of their anger at players such as goalkeeper Volkan Demirel – a target for Olympiakos – Alex and Roberto Carlos, who all performed poorly.

Galatasaray, who won their first two UEFA Cup group games against Olympiakos and Benfica, are almost certain to progress in Europe. But poor domestic form prompted the board to bring back "Grandpa" Karl Heinz Feldkamp as "technical advisor", although coach Mikael Skibbe insisted he was still in charge.

Mehmet Demircan

MALTA

Fitzel still in charge

National team coach Dusan Fitzel has vowed to stay on despite a disappointing start to the World Cup qualifying campaign and a 1-0 friendly defeat by Iceland.

On the domestic front, Birkirkara led the Premier League with 17 points but unbeaten champions Valletta are hard on their heels after a 2-1 derby win over Floriana.

Domenico Aquilina

ALBANIA

Blessing for Haan

UEFA president Michel Platini's declaration that Kosovo cannot yet be admitted to his organisation since they are not recognised by the United Nations is certainly not the worst news for Albania coach Arie Haan.

Five of his squad – Arjan Beqaj, Armend Dallku, Debatik Curri, Lorik Cana and Besart Berisha – are Kosovans and the Dutchman knows he would have a gigantic hole to fill if he lost them.

Marseille's Cana said: "I am proud to play for Albania but if Kosova one day plays in the world arena, perhaps I would make another decision."

Title contenders Tirana and Vllaznia battled to a 1-1 draw, enabling the former to stay a point clear of their

opponents. But the game was marred by clashes between rival sets of fans both in and outside the ground.

Gezim Nushi

MACEDONIA

Vardar turn to Gjurovski

Milko Gjurovski was appointed new coach of FK Vardar – their third this season with the league only 10 games old. The 45-year-old former Macedonian international succeeded Zikica Tasevski, and signed a contract until the end of the season.

But Gjurovski could only draw his first three games, leaving his side eight points behind leaders Makedonija GP and already out of the national cup.

Tasevski had lasted four games without a win after his predecessor, Serb Ratko Dostanic, left the club in protest, he said, at the recognition of Kosovo by Macedonia's government.

In other coaching changes, Dragan Boceski replaced Dragan Mateski at Napredok, Blagoja Kitanovski has taken on Pelister after quitting Nedzat Husein, while Gjore Jovanovski succeeds Baze Lazarevski at Metalurg.

Michel Stojmanovski

MONTENEGRO

Mogren on title track

Mogren showed they meant business by beating title-holders Buducnost for the second time in this season to stay three points ahead of Grbalj at the top of the league and seven points ahead of Buducnost.

Zeta, the 2007 champions, have hit a wall. They slumped to a third home defeat when going down 2-1 to Petrovac and are also out of the domestic cup, beaten 4-2 on aggregate by Jedinstvo in the last 16.

Vladimir Novak

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Ton up for Blazevic

Former Croatia and Iran boss Miroslav Blazevic celebrated his 100th match as a national coach with Bosnia's 4-3 win over Slovenia.

Blazevic, 73, paid tribute to Hoffenheim forward Vedad Ibisevic, who has emerged this season as a key player for club and country. "I have a forward who's better today than Zlatan Ibrahimovic," he said. "You'll see next summer when Ibisevic leaves Hoffenheim for one of the strongest European clubs."

In the league, Zrinjski were the leaders at the winter break, six points ahead of Slavija from Sarajevo. The big surprise was the demise of defending champions Maxima , who were 13th amid stories of infighting at the club.

Zdravko Reic

ISRAEL

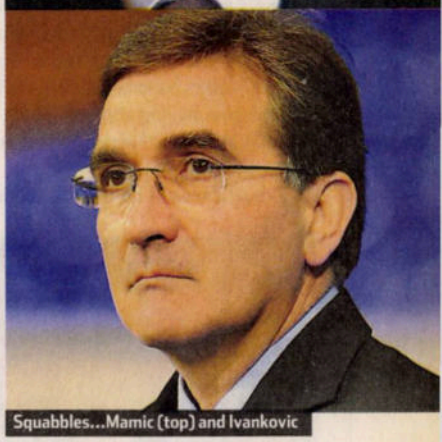
Beitar blues

Beitar Jerusalem's bid for a third successive league title seems to have run aground.

They are in sixth place, nine points adrift of joint leaders Maccabi Haifa and Maccabi Netanya – neither of whom look convincing championship material – and their nervous, erratic displays are due in part to the uncertainty created by billionaire owner Arkady Gaydamak, whose dismal showing in the Jerusalem mayoral elections prompted him to suggest that he could abandon the club next season.

Gaydamak had been seeking support from Beitar fans at the polls, but it never materialised.

Ori Lewis



Squabbles...Mamic (top) and Ivankovic

SERBIA

It's hello, goodbye from Savo

Out with a bang...Milosevic scores the first of his two goals against Bulgaria

VETERAN STRIKER Savo Milosevic enjoyed a unique farewell to international football as Serbia thumped Bulgaria 6-1 in a friendly.

The 35-year-old was actually playing his first game for Serbia – the previous 101 had been for Yugoslavia and Serbia & Montenegro – and he managed to miss two penalties then scored twice (his 36th and 37th international goals), before being substituted to a standing ovation.

It was another impressive performance by the national team under new coach Radomir Antic following two World Cup qualifying wins – 3-0 against Lithuania and 3-1 against Austria.

Dan Tana (formerly Dobrivoje Tanasijevic) was elected new chairman of Red Star, but only after opponent Zoran Bingulac was ruled out because he is active in politics, contrary to the club's statutes. Tana's elevation did not go down too well with the fans, however, as in his first game he was greeted by insulting songs and a banner that read "Yankee Go Home" (Tana has US citizenship).

Partizan underlined their determination to retain the title with a 5-1 victory over OFK Belgrade to stay eight points clear of Vojvodina, but Red Star managed only a 1-1 draw at Javor and were third, 11 points adrift of their city rivals.

Vladimir Novak

CROATIA

Dinamo duo split again

THE LOVE-HATE relationship between Dinamo Zagreb supremo Zdravko Mamic and Branko Ivankovic took another turn when the coach departed four months into his second spell at the club.

Ivankovic , who resigned last January after a series of rows with Mamic, was reappointed in the summer on a four-year deal. But despite Dinamo leading the league, it appears the two still could not co-exist and have agreed that Ivankovic will leave with a £157,000 pay-off.

It is Mamic's 14th coaching change in eight years and he has already named Marijan Vlak, Ivankovic's assistant, as the new boss for his third stint in charge.

Hajduk Split, meanwhile, parted company with coach Goran Vucevic but his successor, assistant Ante Mise, oversaw a run of five successive wins to lift them to a point behind Dinamo.

Zdravko Reic

POLAND

Mergers bringing a profit

MERGER is currently the key to success in Polish football. Polonia Warsaw, who joined forces in the summer with Groclin Dyskobolia Grodzisk, led the table at the halfway stage from Lech Poznan, Legia Warsaw and Wisla Krakow.

Polonia finished seventh in the last season's second division but owner Jozef Wojciechowski bought Groclin – along with their players and their place in the Premier League – for £5million.

The leaders have been criticised for their unattractive playing style but coach Jacek Zielinski insisted: "I won't apologise to anybody for our victories."

One of Zielinski's best players has been uncompromising defender Tomasz Jodlowiec, 23, who almost joined Napoli in August but shocked everybody when he refused a deal, opting to stay in Poland for another year.

Meanwhile, second-placed Lech, who merged with Amica Wronki in 2006, have a very simple aim this season – the league title. If they fail coach Franciszek Smuda will be sacked.

Lech are the most attacking team in the League, having scored 28 goals and are the only Polish side left in European competition. They drew 2-2 with Nancy in their first UEFA Cup Group H game. One of their goals was scored by 21-year-old Bosnia-Herzegovnian playmaker Semir Stilic, who was signed from Zeljeznicar for £425,000 in the summer and is one of the new stars of the Polish League.

Another new name at Lech is striker Robert Lewandowski, signed from second division Znicz Pruszkow for £200,000. A sharp finisher, Lewandowski scored on his debuts in the League and UEFA Cup and for the national team.

Surprisingly, Gornik Zabrze were bottom of the table despite heavy support from their sponsor, insurance company Allianz. Coach Ryszard Wieczorek was sacked and replaced by the much-travelled Henryk Kasperczak.

Dariusz Kurowski

It won't hurt, honest...an anxious Lech Poznan wall brace themselves at a Nancy free kick during the UEFA Cup group encounter

UKRAINE

Devic the history man

Marko Devic of Metalist Kharkiv became the first player from outside the former Soviet Union to play for Ukraine when he made his debut in the 1-0 friendly win over Norway.

The Serbian-born striker, who arrived in 2004 from FK Vozdovaz, adopted Ukrainian nationality last year and finished last season as the league's top scorer with 19 goals.

Olexiy Mykhaylychenko, the national coach, is now eyeing another Metalist star, Brazilian striker Jackson Coelho, who may follow in the steps of his Serbian club-mate.

In the league, defending champions Shakhtar closed the gap on leaders Dynamo Kyiv to 12 points after a 1-0 home win over their bitter rivals thanks to a goal from Brazilian Willian.

National team defender Taras Mikhalik has extended his contract with Dynamo until 2013. Mikhalik has proved irreplaceable at the heart of defence and has succeeded goalkeeper Olexander Shovkovskyi as captain.

Six Premier League coaches lost their jobs in the first half of the season. Among the latest victims were Metalurh Zaporizhya's Anatoliy Tchantsev and Vitaliy Shevchenko of Chornomorets.

Former Dynamo Kyiv and national team star Serhii Kovalets has been appointed head coach of struggling newcomers FC Lviv.

Oleg Zadernovsky

BELARUS

Three in a row for BATE

BATE Borisov achieved a hat-trick of league titles – and another tilt at Champions League football – after leading the race from the first day of the season.

Coach Victor Goncharenko's side won 19 of their 30 matches, losing only once, and finished five points ahead of Dinamo Minsk, while BATE strikers Vitaliy Rodionov and Gennadiy Bliznuk shared the Golden Boot trophy with 16 goals apiece.

At the bottom, Darida coach Yuri Vergeychik was fired after failing to save the club from relegation while Alexander Sednev of Savit, who finished only two points better off, also lost his job.

Darida will be replaced by First League champions FC Minsk.

Oleg Zadernovsky

BULGARIA

Humiliation in Belgrade

The national team suffered their most humiliating defeat for almost 80 years when they lost 6-1 to Serbia in Belgrade.

It could have been even worse had goalkeeper Georgi Petkov not saved two penalties from Savo Milosevic.

Manchester United striker Dimitar Berbatov, who was substituted after 30 minutes with a back injury, was criticised after the game for a lacklustre contribution but responded: "If I am standing in somebody's way, I am ready to leave the national team."

Coach Plamen Markov insisted he had no intention of quitting, adding: "It wouldn't change the situation."

UEFA president Michel Platini, on a visit to Sofia, welcomed suggestions that Bulgaria could co-host Euro 2020 with Romania.

Rumen Paytashev

HUNGARY

Year ends on a high

The national team finished 2008 on a high note with a promising 2-0 win over Northern Ireland in Belfast. In probably their best performance under new Dutch coach Erwin Koeman, the Magyars won with second-half goals from Sandor Torghelle and Zoltan Gera.

Torghelle has now scored for his country in three consecutive games – this after Koeman's much-quoted complaint that Hungary had no strikers – while Gera had his best game for Hungary all year. But man of the match was Anderlecht centre-back Roland Juhasz whose display could have only lent weight to rumours about a move to the Bundesliga or Serie A.

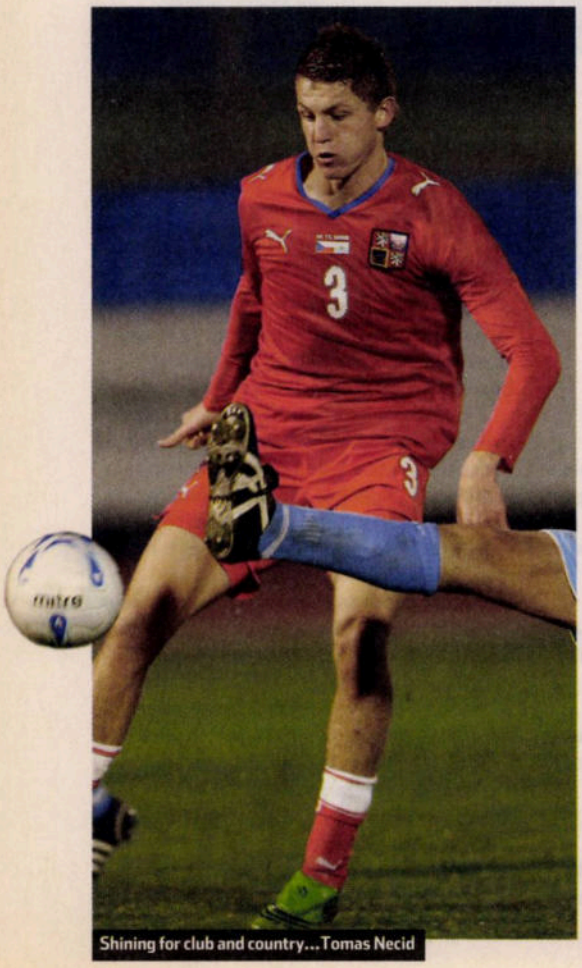
"We played patient, motivated football," said Koeman. "Our attitude was just right."

Peterjon Cresswell

Costly round...Boya

CZECH REPUBLIC

Slavia can't cut ties with Necid



Shining for club and country...Tomas Necid

SLAVIA PRAGUE are attempting to keep Tomas Necid until the end of the season, having agreed a deal last August that would see the 19-year-old move to CSKA Moscow over the winter break.

Slavia now want take the young striker on loan from the Russian side on a six-month deal. Necid has emerged as one of the stars of the season so far, scoring 11 goals in 15 games, breaking into the national team for the World Cup qualifier against San Marino and scoring on his debut.

After a poor start to their campaign, the national team moved up to second place in Group 3 with a 3-0 win in San Marino. Petr Rada's side were without injured regulars Tomas Rosicky, Jaroslav Plasil, Zdenek Grygera and Marek Matejovsky but eventually broke down a stubborn defence with second-half goals from Radoslav Kovac, Zdenek Pospech and Necid.

Slavia, the only Czech club still in European competition, made a losing start to their UEFA Cup group campaign, going down 1-0 at home to Aston Villa, but extended their domestic lead. With one game remaining before the break, Slavia were eight points clear of second-placed Mlada Boleslav and nine ahead of Banik Ostrava, in third. Sparta, Slavia's traditional rivals, had dropped to sixth place, 12 points adrift.

Brno's Petr Ulicny became the latest coach to lose his job after a run of poor results.

Petr Cech won this year's Golden Ball award, presented by Czech football writers to the country's top player. Slavia's Karel Jarolim was named best coach while 30-year-old Slavia defender Frantisek Drizdal broke tradition with the "discovery of the year" award, normally reserved for young players.

Sam Beckwith

ROMANIA

Rapid bar for Boya

RAPID BUCHAREST'S Cameroon striker Pierre Boya was axed from the squad after being caught in a bar late at night after his team's 0-0 draw with Universitatea Craiova, which left his team further off the pace in the title race.

"I don't want to lose a whole team by keeping Boya in the squad, so I prefer to lose a single player, even though he is among the best," said Rapid's Portuguese coach Jose Peseiro.

Former Coventry striker Viorel Moldovan enjoyed four wins in a row as new coach of Vaslui while ex-Chelsea right-back Dan Petrescu, who refused an offer to coach Steaua Bucharest, is climbing the table with modest Unirea Urziceni.

Urziceni, a town of only 30,000 inhabitants, 60 km east of Bucharest, have specialised in hiring players who have been rejected by other local teams.

Steaua went 13 matches without a win, including a defeat to Bayern Munich in the Champions League, the worst run in the club's history.

Radu Timofte

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

The boss has gone WHERE?...Palmeiras players have to do without coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo, opting for TV pundit duties, as they go out of the Sudamericana Cup in Buneos Aires

BRAZIL

Sao Paulo on brink of glory

A RUN OF 16 games unbeaten left Sao Paulo on the verge of a third successive Brazilian championship title, their sixth in all – and both will be records. With two rounds to go, the club needed just two points to be sure.

As their rivals have faltered, Sao Paulo have found form. The hard-fought 2-1 win away to relegation-threatened Vasco da Gama means that they have won nine of their last 10 games. The exception – a 2-2 draw at Palmeiras – was also important. It marked the start of the slide of their city rivals and championship contenders.

The atmosphere at Palmeiras worsened when, for the second leg of the Sudamericana Cup quarter-final, coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo did not travel with the team to Buenos Aires to face Argentinos Juniors. Instead he stayed in a television studio in Sao Paulo analysing the game for the benefit of TV Globo's viewers.

Although Palmeiras were not giving priority to the competition, and were fielding a reserve side (they lost 2-0 to go out 3-0 on aggregate) Luxemburgo's option did not go down well with some of their supporters, who were further outraged when the coach criticised keeper Marcos, a club icon, for spending the last 15 minutes of the game at home to Gremio charging forward to help the attack in a vain search for an equaliser.

As the team prepared to fly from Sao Paulo to Rio de Janeiro for a game against Flamengo, it appears that a group of fans attacked the Palmeiras coach. What exactly took place is not clear – for some reason the security camera images of the vital moments are unavailable – but the next day Luxemburgo had his arm in a sling. His ego was perhaps more damaged than his elbow when Flamengo beat his side 5-2.

The best Palmeiras can now hope for is a place in the 2009 Libertadores Cup. They are up against Gremio, Cruzeiro and Flamengo and one will miss out. Gremio retain faint hopes of winning the championship should Sao Paulo unexpectedly trip at the last.

The national team were also in action with their first friendly at full strength on home soil for over six years. With Kaka in fine form and Luis Fabiano helping himself to a hat-trick, Brazil trounced shambolic Portugal 6-2.

The venue for such an occasion was bizarre indeed – the remodelled Bezerrao stadium in Gama, a satellite town on the outskirts of Brasilia. The night had as much to do with politics as with football – this was part of Brasilia's campaign to press its claims for a high profile in the 2014 World Cup.

But the Bererrao stadium is so small (about 20,000 capacity) that when the circus comes to town it will be used only as a training ground. With many tickets handed out to political big shots, those that were left for the general public were few in number and exorbitant in price.

With London's sizeable Brazilian community, the bizarre fact is that more of Kaka's compatriots will be able to see their team in action when Brazil return to the Emirates stadium in February to face Italy.

Tim Vickery

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

Agitation...Eriksson makes a point to Torrado

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

Sven sneaks through

SVEN GORAN ERIKSSON'S Mexico avoided a humiliating early exit from the World Cup qualifiers by the skin of their teeth as they sneaked into the final stage of the contest on goal difference from Jamaica.

Mexico finished second in semi-final Group Two after losing their final match in Honduras and finished level with the Reggae Boyz on points. Jamaica beat Canada 3-0 in their last game but fell three goals short of ousting Mexico while Honduras topped the group.

United States, Trinidad & Tobago, Costa Rica and El Salvador were the other teams to qualify for the final stage which will be contested on a round-robin basis next year. The top three teams qualify directly for South Africa while the fourth will play off against the fifth South American side for another place.

On current form, it is more than conceivable Mexico could finish behind the US, Costa Rica and Honduras and then get beaten by the likes of Uruguay or Chile.

Mexico won their first three games in the group, all at home, but then picked up a measly one point on their travels as they lost in Jamaica, drew in Canada and were beaten in Honduras.

Eriksson went into the game in San Pedro Sula aware that one of his predecessors, Enrique Meza, was fired after a 3-1 defeat in the same stadium during the 2002 qualifiers. An own goal from Ricardo Osorio early in the second half gave the Honduras another win while Mexico lost their heads as Gerardo Torrado and Carlos Vela were sent off in the last five minutes.

The Mexican media called for Eriksson's head and the *Record* sports newspaper said it would help pay the £2million penalty which the federation will have to cough up if the Swede is fired. San Luis coach Raul Arias has also been suggested as a replacement. The national coach is hired and fired by the 18 first division club presidents, who were due to meet this month.

The Swede is clearly not impressed with the standard of the Mexican championship and has put his faith in foreign-based players even when, as in the cases of Arsenal's Vela and Manchester City's Nery Castillo, they are not playing regularly.

The US, already qualified, finished top of Group One and Trinidad & Tobago followed them by beating Cuba 3-0 in their last game. Group Three winners Costa Rica, who went through with El Salvador, were the only team to manage a 100 per cent record.

Brian Homewood

ARGENTINA

Small is the new big

THE OUTSTANDING players in the opening championship are the smallest – River Plate's Diego Buonanotte (at 1.63m) and Racing Club's Maximiliano Moralez (1.61m) – and they have stood out even if their teams have not set the tournament alight.

Buonanotte, who was in Argentina's Olympic-winning team, plays for River Plate who for once look like finishing the opening championship at the bottom of the table.

Diego Simeone became the sixth coach to leave his club in the current tournament (see Headliners, page 15). Most players wanted Simeone to stay, although they also said they did not understand some of his methods, including his diet rules – fruit, vegetables, no cakes and, above all, none of the popular barbecues.

When junior team coach Gabriel Rodriguez took over after his charges had won seven of the season's nine junior divisions, he restarted the weekly pre-match barbecues, slowed down play and River Plate won their next match. But at press time they were still rooted to the bottom.

Moralez has shone for Racing Club and scored the vital goal to avoid relegation in a play-off at the end of last season. Racing Club had been in administration for 11 years but their administrators Blaquiceleste went bankrupt with debts of £8million. Elections for a new club committee were scheduled for December 21 but the future does not look bright and Moralez, who is on loan from FC Moscow, is expected to move back to Russia before next season.

Eric Weil

Big impact...Diego Buonanotte is shining in a struggling River Plate side

PERU

Federation suspended by FIFA

PERUVIAN FOOTBALL has reached a new low point with FIFA's decision to suspend the country from international competition due to a squabble between the government and the federation (FPF).

The row has been brewing since 2006 when the government's Institute of Sports suspended FPF president Manuel Burga for five years for failing to change the federation's statutes and bring it into line with Peruvian law.

Burga ignored the suspension and was re-elected president the following year.

The government retaliated this year by refusing to allow the FPF to use its stadiums for the South American Under-20 Championship which was due to be staged in the country in January. As a result, the competition was transferred to Venezuela. As FIFA does not accept outside interference in football affairs, the next step was to suspend the country. This means that Peruvian clubs cannot compete in the Libertadores Cup and the national side cannot take part in World Cup qualifiers.

FIFA's executive was due to discuss the matter in Tokyo in December, when Peru could be kicked out altogether if nothing is done.

Fortunately for Peru, their next World Cup qualifier is not until March when they host Chile and the Libertadores does not start until late January.

Peru reached the last eight of the 1970 and 1978 World Cups playing stylish if erratic football and also appeared in 1982 but failed to progress beyond the first stage.

Since then, Peruvian football has gone into a long, slow decline and become caught up in a self-destructive wave of negativity.

Their attempt to switch home matches to high-altitude Cusco reeked of desperation and the futility of the plan was cruelly exposed when they lost 5-1 away to Ecuador – at 9,000 feet above sea level.

Last November, four top players – Claudio Pizarro, Jefferson Farfan, Santiago Acasiete and Andres Mendoza – were given 18-month international bans for alleged indiscipline.

The whole case seemed to revolve around the claims of a TV reporter and the impression was that the FPF was just trying to put up a smokescreen to hide its own failings.

Brian Homewood

Here's to an end of our problems...Peruvian federation chief Manuel Burga discusses the sutuation with CONMEBOL (South American federation) counterpart Nicolas Leoz

BOLIVIA

Aurora claim title

Aurora, from Cochabamba, became the fourth provincial side in a row to claim the title as they beat Blooming in the final of the 2008 closing championship.

It was also the third time in four tournaments that a new name was added to the list of champions, Universitario de Sucre and Real Potosi having also won their first titles recently.

Blooming won the first leg of the final 2-0 but Aurora replied with a 3-0 win in the second. As goal difference is not used, the tie went to a third game which ended 2-2 before Aurora won 4-3 on penalties with Argentinian Federico Bongioanni, goalkeeper Silvio Dulcich, Julio Cesar Hurtado and Paraguayan Aquilino Villalba – who scored both goals in regulation time – on target.

Aurora, whose team had an average age of 25 and have generally lived in the shadows of larger neighbours Wilstermann, were led by Julio Cesar Baldivieso, who is only eight months into his first coaching job.

Baldivieso, a survivor of Bolivia's last World Cup appearance in 1994, is regarded as one of the finest players the country has produced, though his career was marred by disciplinary problems and he failed a drug test in 2006.

He gambled successfully on a number of players from the club's youth divisions, including teenagers Ivan Huayhuata and Vladimir Castellon.

Brian Homewood

Hate...Danubio and Nacional fans battle

URUGUAY

Pitch battles end title race

THE 2008-09 championship was suspended indefinitely after about 200 fans fought a vicious battle on the pitch followed the top-of-the-table match between Danubio and Nacional.

Danubio won 1-0, leapfrogging Nacional to go one point clear of their opponents at the top of the championship's first stage. But their joy was marred by incidents shortly after the final whistle.

Nacional fans broke down fencing at the tiny Jardines del Hipodromo stadium and invaded the pitch. At one point, they managed to snatch a Danubio flag, which enraged the home fans who also ran on to the field.

A pitched battle followed in which fans used iron bars, corner flags and anything else they could get their hands on as weapons. Despite the trouble, no arrests or injuries were reported, but the Uruguayan FA immediately suspended the competition.

The championship was also suspended for nearly one month in 2006 when a Cerro fan was murdered in front his wife and daughter by a group of Penarol fans at a bus stop.

Nacional, however, earned another chance to go back to the top when the FA accepted their appeal that their match against Villa Espanola should be played after all. The match, in August, was called off because Nacional turned up five minutes late for the kick-off and Villa were awarded a 2-0 win.

Brian Homewood

CANADA

Montreal frozen out

THIS HAS TO be the ultimate nightmare before Christmas for Montreal Impact. The favourites for the next wave of expansion in Major League Soccer due for 2011 are no longer in the running.

During his annual 'State of the League' address, MLS commissioner Don Garber announced the Montreal group, led by American tycoon George Gillett – co-owner of Liverpool – and Impact president Joey Saputo, had pulled out of the race, stating possible financial trouble.

Three days later, Saputo came short of calling Garber a liar, offering a completely opposite version. "Never at any point did we withdraw from the process. We were rather informed that our bid was not retained," he said. "The Montreal partnership never had any trouble whatsoever financing its bid."

So what's the deal?

MLS set its expansion fee at £24.5million while the Montreal bid offered £22.2m to pay the fee and expand its ground capacity from 13,000 to 20,000 seats but the Canadian currency losing value the MLS' asking price is now worth £24.6m. Add to that the £7.5m for the stadium upgrade and you end up with a £32m bill.

"Of all MLS potential new markets, we are one of the very few that can immediately deliver a turnkey soccer operation," said Saputo. "I can only assume that the expansion fee alone is the predominant criteria for entering MLS. Having said that, we were told that MLS is out of the picture for 2011."

Between the original announcement by MLS and the Montreal press conference, Garber had also stated his position in a television interview during the half-time show of the MLS Cup Final, saying that indeed Montreal did not drop out.

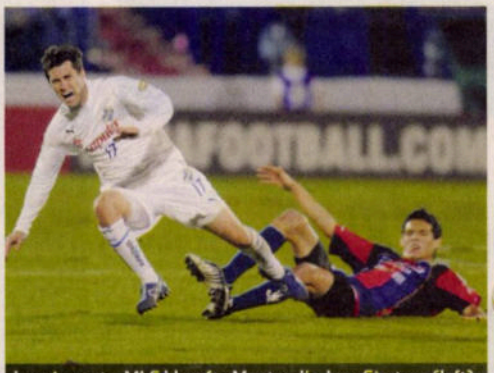
Vancouver and Ottawa are the two remaining Canadian bids along with St Louis, Miami, Portland and Atlanta. With a plan relying on over £60m of government money in the current economic context, it is hard to believe the Ottawa bid can win the contest, but the Canadian capital still made a strong impression with MLS authorities, leading Garber to even say their presentation "blew us away".

With Montreal out of the picture, Vancouver appears to be a front-runner, which would create an immediate rivalry between Whitecaps and next-door neighbours Seattle Sounders, who are joining MLS next summer. Garber said Vancouver's bid was "one of the best I've ever seen".

Despite the lavish praise, Garber still shed a bucket of cold water on the Canadian hopes. "The more teams we add there [in Canada], the more it takes away from growing our footprint and our television ratings in the United States," he said.

A decision is due in the first quarter of 2009.

Philippe Germain


Less impact...MLS blow for Montreal's Joey Gjertsen (left)

CHILE

Barrios ban row

Colo Colo striker Lucas Barrios was banned for one match after winning a penalty by diving during the 4-3 defeat by Cobreloa.

Barrios converted the spot kick himself but the Chilean League's disciplinary committee reviewed the video evidence and came to the conclusion, as had most spectators at the time, that Barrios conned the referee.

Interestingly, players were outraged at the ban and the players' union SIFUP declared their unconditional support for the Argentinian. "The big clubs are going to suffer more from this because more of our games are shown on the television," said Colo Colo captain Arturo Sanhueza.

Brian Homewood

MEXICO

Big guns bow out

America and Guadalajara both failed to qualify for the knockout stages of the opening championship.

America, whose coach Ramon Diaz is almost certainly the best-paid in the Americas at £1.8million a year, finished bottom of Group Two with five wins, six draws and seven defeats. It was the third successive time the Eagles have failed to make the last eight.

Diaz promised a new team for the closing championship. "The America which you will see in the future will be totally different in their game and in their attitude," he said.

Guadalajara, the only Mexican club not to field foreigners, finished fourth in the group with 25 points and coach Efrain Flores almost inevitably quit after 14 months in the job, the longest-serving under flamboyant owner Jorge Vergara.

Brian Homewood

I'm innocent...Barrios

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

Continental shift...Djeparov hoists Asia's best player award

Uzbek Djeparov simply the best

SERVER DJEPAROV became the first player from Uzbekistan to claim Asia's Player of the Year award as the profile of the central Asian nation continues to rise.

Djeparov, who played a key role in Bunyodkor's run to the semi-finals of the Asian Champions League, claimed the award ahead of Japanese duo Yasuhito Endo and Yuji Nakazawa, Sebastian Soria of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates' Ismail Mattar.

Under the AFC's controversial assessment system – where players win points for every game in which they are named man of the match – Djeparov amassed 10 points more than Mattar with Soria third, Nakazawa of Yokohama F Marinos fourth and Gamba Osaka's Endo a surprise fifth.

Endo had been instrumental in his club's impressive Champions League win earlier in the month but his lack of eye-catching performances for the Japan national team cost him the trophy.

The award capped an impressive season for Djeparov, who was part of Bunyodkor's league-winning side, the first time the club has been crowned domestic champions. Bunyodkor, who came to global prominence with the acquisition earlier this year of Brazilian star Rivaldo, also won the Uzbekistan Cup while the national side retain hopes of qualifying for the World Cup finals for the first time since joining the Asian confederation back in 1993.

"In Uzbekistan, there has been a positive change in the development of football," said Djeparov. "The government is doing a lot to develop the game so to receive this trophy will have a positive effect on football in my country and its image in Asia and around the world."

Gamba coach Akira Nishino was named Asian Coach of the Year after guiding his side to the Champions League crown for the first time, and Gamba made it a double by being named Club of the Year.

Ahmad Khalil of the United Arab Emirates took the Young Player of the Year award while Japan were named National Team of the Year.

Michael Church

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

ROUND-UP

ASIA

- Shandong Luneng claimed their second CHINESE Super League title in three years after a 0-0 draw with Guangzhou. Shandong finished two points ahead of Shanghai Shenhua with Beijing Guoan third. The three, plus fourth-placed Tianjin, will go into the draw for next year's revamped Asian Champions League.

- Bahrain's Muharraq handed Lebanon's Safa a 10-5 aggregate defeat to win the AFC Cup and earn a place in the Champions League qualifiers. Brazilian striker Leandro da Silva hit a hat-trick in the first leg.

- The United Arab Emirates won the Asian Under-19 Championship, an Ahmed Khalil double ensuring a 2-1 win over Uzbekistan.

- In SINGAPORE, Armed Forces defeated Home United 1-0 in the penultimate round to clinch the S-League title, then completed another double, beating Woodlands Wellington 2-1 in the Cup Final.

- In LEBANON Al Ansar have parted company with Welsh coach Roy Thomas.

- Phnom Penh Empire wrapped up the CAMBODIA League title, finishing six points clear of National Defense Ministry FC.

- In INDIA, State Bank of Travancore beat Salgaocar 1-0 in the preliminary final of the Federation Cup.

Azam Mahmood & Michael Church

OCEANIA

- FIJIAN prodigy Roy Krishna hit four goals in four days in the World Cup and Oceania Champions League. He scored both goals as Fiji beat New Zealand at Lautoka – their first win over the All Whites in 24 years – and another brace in Waitakere United's 3-0 win over Vanuatu's Port Vila Sharks.

- Pago Youth clinched the AMERICAN SAMOA title with two rounds to spare when opponents Utulei Youth forfeited. It is the third time this season Utulei have failed to raise a team and they have been suspended.

Paul Moon

Champions...UAE celebrate the Asian Under-19 title

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL

Al Ahly's title

THE STEREOTYPE of African football was given much credence in a CAF Champions League Final that was full of incident and real scoring chances but characterised by some woeful finishing.

But that did not detract from yet another enthralling tie to decide the title, which went back to Al Ahly of Egypt for the third time in four years. With their success over Coton Sport of Cameroon, 4-2 on aggregate, Al Ahly posted firm evidence to back the long-held claim they are the best African club side of all time.

Al Ahly went past the previous record of five Champions League wins they jointly held with arch-rivals Zamalek and will in 2009 set off in search of an unprecedented fifth successive appearance in a Champions League Final.

Al Ahly lost just a single game en route in the Final, way back in the preliminary knockout round, and were always going to be the side to beat.

But they were pushed all the way in the Final by upstarts Coton Sport, who were competing in the league phase for the first time and were the first side from Cameroon in almost 30 years to reach the Final of Africa's top club competition.

The first leg in Cairo saw Al Ahly win 2-0, both goals coming inside the opening 20 minutes from Wael Gomaa and Flavio, the club's Angolan international, even though the latter conjured up some horrendous misses later on in the game, thereby failing to kill off the tie.

The second leg in Garoua was always going to be tough for Al Ahly, although in the semi-final they had put together a perfect defensive plan when they took on the arguably more formidable Enyimba of Nigeria. By playing three defensive midfielders, Ahly had closed off all avenues for their hosts and forced a 0-0 draw, going on to win the second leg in Cairo and book their place in the Final for a fourth successive year.

But against Coton Sport, they found it particularly difficult dealing with a relentless wave of attacks from their hosts, compounded by the hot conditions and in front of roaring, hostile and almost rancid crowd.

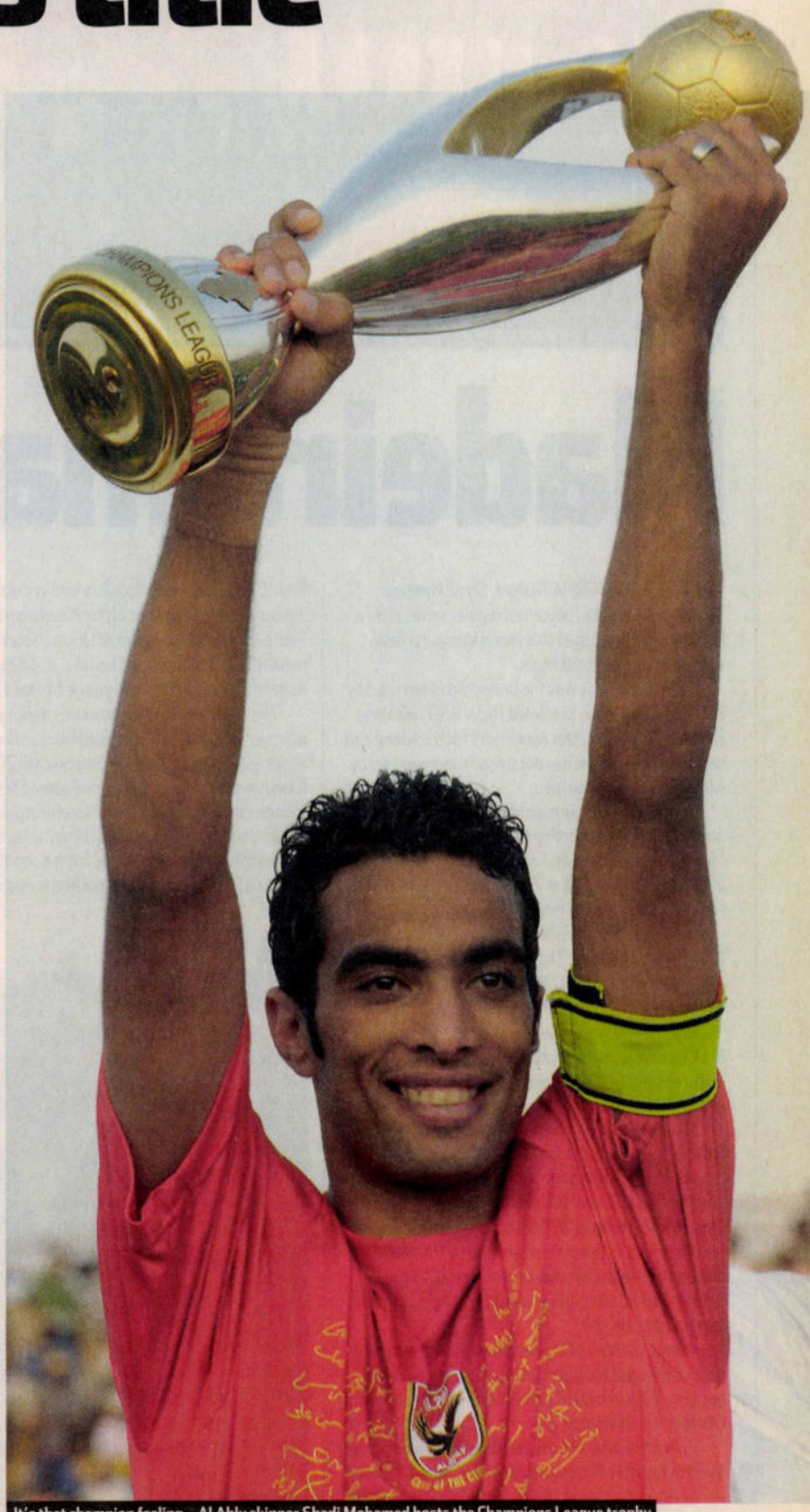
Not even a goal midway through the first half from Ahmed Hassan, which stretched the Egyptians' aggregate lead to three goals, was enough to relieve the pressure.

By the hour, Coton Sport had pulled two goals back through defender Karim Abdoul and striker Baba Ousmaila but were squandering opportunity after opportunity as they sought two more to take the aggregate lead.

Ousmaila and his frontline partner Kamilou Daouda had observers aghast at times as they emulated Flavio's first-leg aberrations with the extraordinary misses they contrived to conjure up.

Al Ahly looked a little like a groggy boxer on the ropes but with time ticking away and their opponents tiring, the Egyptians gathered their strength as triumph looked imminent. A foul on Mohamed Barakat in stoppage time enabled captain Shadi Mohamed to convert the resulting penalty and make it 2-2. Seconds later Al Ahly were confirmed as champions.

Mark Gleeson



It's that champion feeling...Al Ahly skipper Shadi Mohamed hosts the Champions League trophy

Putting on a show...the Madeira and Gibraltar teams line up before the opening game of the Jersey International Small Nations Tournament

Madeira make good

THE JERSEY INTERNATIONAL Small Nations Tournament is set to become a regular series after a bumper crowd watched this year's inaugural final, when Madeira beat the hosts.

The tournament was the brainchild of new Jersey Football Association president Ricky Weir, who was elected to provide better opponents for the island and raise crowds for matches outside of the annual derby with neighbours Guernsey.

Southampton chairman Michael Wilde lives in Jersey and his sponsorship helped the JFA bring Madeira and a third side, Gibraltar, over for a weekend of matches on November 7-9 and more than 1,000 fans paid to watch the final.

Weir said: "Both visiting teams want to see the tournament continue. The only question is whether it's annual or bi-annual. At the moment it's going to be bi-annual because of the Island Games."

Madeira are not in the Island Games Association but Gibraltar won the football event at the last Games in Rhodes in 2007 and are due to defend their trophy in the Finnish Island of Aland next summer.

Madeira team manager Rui Mancio also wants better quality matches for his team. He called up seven players from CS Maritimo, who play in the Portuguese first division and have featured regularly in the UEFA Cup, most recently in 2004-05.

The rest of Madeira's players came from local league clubs with the emphasis on youth. Of the 17-man squad, three players were 21, one 23 and the remainder under 20.

A large number of Madeirans work in Jersey and the hosts hoped for a big turn-out to see their team but only 200 fans watched Madeira's game against Gibraltar on November 7.

Pontassolense's Mario Rondon Fernandez opened the scoring after 13 minutes. Gibraltar then lost John Paul-Duarte of Lincoln to injury and in the second half, Jansen Moreno was sent off for handling in the area. Pedro-Mauricio Rodriguez of Uniao missed the penalty but Fernandez slid home Luis-Miguel Aurelio's cross in the 73rd minute to seal a 2-0 win .

The next day, Jersey made their debut with a 2-1 win over Gibraltar at Springfield Stadium in front of about 400 fans. Despite playing twice in 24 hours, Gibraltar played much better and scored first after 31 minutes through St Joseph's Aaron Asquez.

The visitors led until the 70th minute, when Jack Cannon of St Peters equalised from a penalty after Trinity's David Le Roux was pushed trying to reach a Marco Viera cross. The referee awarded six minutes of injury time and in the last moments Trinity's Barry Beatson scored Jersey's winner.

The hosts also had to play a second game in 24 hours in the decider against Madeira, whose young side had enjoyed a 48-hour break between games.

Mario Teixeira of Camacha open the scoring for Madeira after eight minutes. Jersey had an equalser ruled out and Santana's Aurelio scored 20 minutes from the end to clinch the visitors' 2-0 victory.

"The best team won and won in the best fashion by playing the best football," said Weir.

Steve Menary

Good to see you...tournament sponsor Michael Wilde does the honours before the Jersey-Madeira decider

Discuss this at worldsoccer.com/forums

INTERNATIONALS

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

ASIA
4th stage
Group 1

Nov 19 - Manama
Bahrain 0
Australia 1 (Bresciano 90)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Moradi (Irn)
Bahrain: Jaffer - Mohammed, Fatadi, M Hubail, Aaish, Abdulrahman (Al-Dosari 79), Mohamed Adnan, Baba (Rahman 75), Okwunwanne, A Hubail (Al-Dakeel 87), Isa.
Australia: Schwarzer - Neill, Cahill (Sterjovski 86), Culina, Wilkshire, Kennedy, Kewell (Holman 71), Carney, Coyne (North 68), Valeri, Bresciano.

Nov 19 - Doha
Qatar 0
Japan 3 (Tatsuya Tanaka 20, Tamada 47, Tulio Tanaka 69)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 13,000. **Ref:** Sun (Chn)
Qatar: M Ahmed - Al-Hamad, Abdulmajed, Siddiq (Hassan 80), Budawood, Montesin (Al-Yazidi 68), Al-Khalfan, Albloushi, Rajab, Khaleefa (Bechir 59), Quintana.
Japan: Kawaguchi - Terada, Uchida, Tulio Tanaka, Endo, Tatsuya Tanaka (Matsui 71), S Nakamura, Tamada (H Sato 90), Nagatomo, Okubo (Okazaki 86), Hasebe.

WC QUALS: ASIA – 4TH STAGE – GROUP 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Australia	3	3	0	0	6	0	9
Japan	3	2	1	0	7	3	7
Qatar	4	1	1	2	4	8	4
Bahrain	3	0	1	2	3	5	1
Uzbekistan	3	0	1	2	1	5	1

Remaining fixtures
11.02.09 Japan-Australia
11.02.09 Uzbekistan-Bahrain
28.03.09 Japan-Bahrain
28.03.09 Uzbekistan-Qatar
01.04.09 Australia-Uzbekistan
01.04.09 Bahrain-Qatar
06.06.09 Qatar-Australia
06.06.09 Uzbekistan-Japan
10.06.09 Australia-Bahrain
10.06.09 Japan-Qatar
17.06.09 Australia-Japan
17.06.09 Bahrain-Uzbekistan

Group 2

Nov 19 - Riyadh
Saudi Arabia 0
South Korea 2 (Lee Keun-ho 77, Park Chu-young 90)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Bashir (Sin)
Saudi Arabia: Ali - Al-Harbi, Tukar, Hawsawi, Ateef, Bin Sultan (Al-Raheb 86), Autef (Al-Hawsawi 78), Al-Shlhoub (Al-Fraidi 57), Hazazi, Al-Dossary, Aziz. *Sent off: Hazazi 57min.*
South Korea: Lee Woon-jae - Oh Beom-seok, Cho Yong-hyung, Kang Min-soo, Lee Young-pyo, Lee Chung-yong (Cho Won-hee 90), Ki Sung-yueng, Kim Jung-woo, Park Ji-sung, Lee Keun-ho (Yeom Ki-hun 89), Jeong Shung-hoon (Park Chu-young 74).

Nov 19 - Dubai
United Arab Emirates 1 (A Jumaa 20)
Iran 1 (Bagheri 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** Mohd Salleh (Mly)
UAE: Nasser - Abdelaziz, H Ali, Qassim, F Jumaa, Al-Shehhi (Khalil 70), A Jumaa, Mallalah (Al-Wehaibi 86), Mubarak (Moadhed 79), Al-Hammadi, Matar.
Iran: Mehdi Rahmati - Hosseini, S Zare (Madanchi 76), Ghorbani, Kaebi, Nekounam, Bagheri, Shojaei, Mahdavikia (Gholamnejad 56), Rezaei, Hashemian (Seyed Salehi 72).

WC QUALS: ASIA – 4TH STAGE – GROUP 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Korea	3	2	1	0	7	2	7
Iran	3	1	2	0	4	3	5
North Korea	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Saudi Arabia	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
UAE	4	0	1	3	4	9	1

Remaining fixtures
11.02.09 Iran-South Korea
11.02.09 North Korea-Saudi Arabia
28.03.09 Iran-Saudi Arabia
28.03.09 North Korea-UAE
01.04.09 Saudi Arabia-UAE
01.04.09 South Korea-North Korea
06.06.09 North Korea-Iran
06.06.09 UAE-South Korea
10.06.09 Iran-UAE
10.06.09 South Korea-Saudi Arabia
17.06.09 Saudi Arabia-North Korea
17.06.09 South Korea-Iran

Top two in each group qualify for the finals. The third-placed countries will meet in a play-off, the winners of which will meet the Oceania section winners (New Zealand) for a place in the finals

CONCACAF
3rd stage
Group 1

Nov 19 - Port-of-Spain
Trinidad & Tobago 3 (Jones 67, Yorke 69, Daniel 89)
Cuba 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Wijngaarde (Sur)
Trinidad & Tobago: Ince - A Edwards, K Thomas, Lawrence, Birchall (Hyland 81), C Gray, Daniel, Latapy (S John 73), C Edwards, Jones (Scotland 79), Yorke.
Cuba: Quintero - Pedro, Marquez, Dranguet, Joel Colome (Martinez 84), Alfonso, Urgelles, Villegas, Linares (Munoz 80), Fernandez, Ruiz (Cordovez 75).

Nov 19 - Commerce City
United States 2 (Cooper 54, Adu 69)
Guatemala 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,303. **Ref:** Archundia (Mex)
United States: Guzan - Thorrington, Goodson, Parkhurst, Bornstein, Adu (Arnaud 83), Mastroeni, Clark, Kljestan, Cooper (Casey 76), Altidore (Ching 76).
Guatemala: Jerez - Castrillo, Noriega, Flores, Albizuris, Acevedo (Lopez 74), Ramirez, Figueroa (Pappa 57), Castillo, Marquez, Avila.

WC QUALS: C'CAF – 3RD STAGE – GP 1 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
United States	6	5	0	1	14	3	15
Trinidad & Tob	6	3	2	1	9	6	11
Guatemala	6	1	2	3	6	7	5
Cuba	6	1	0	5	5	18	3

20.08.08 Cuba-Trinidad & Tobago..... 1-3
20.08.08 Guatemala-United States..... 0-1
06.09.08 Cuba-United States..... 0-1
06.09.08 Trinidad & Tobago-Guatemala.. 1-1
10.09.08 Guatemala-Cuba..... 4-1
10.09.08 United States-Trinidad & Tob ... 3-0
11.10.08 Guatemala-Trinidad & Tobago.. 0-0
11.10.08 United States-Cuba..... 6-1
15.10.08 Cuba-Guatemala..... 2-1
15.10.08 Trinidad & Tob-United States ... 2-1
19.11.08 Trinidad & Tobago-Cuba..... 3-0
19.11.08 United States-Guatemala..... 2-0

Group 2

Nov 19 - San Pedro Sula
Honduras 1 (Osorio og 51)
Mexico 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Batres (Gtm)
Honduras: N Valladares - Figueroa, Bernardez, Mendoza, Guerrero, Guevara, W Palacios, D Suazo, Costly, Thomas (Turcios 46), E Martinez (R Nunez 71).
Mexico: O Sanchez - Osorio, A Galindo, Marquez, Salcido, Arce (N Castillo 72), Pardo, Naelson (Vela 56), Guardado, Torrado, Vuoso (Bravo 82).
Sent off: Torrado 89min, Vela 90min.

Nov 19 - Kingston
Jamaica 3 (Shelton 28, King pen 57, Cummings 85)
Canada 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 28,000. **Ref:** Aguilar (ElS)
Jamaica: Ricketts - Marshall, C Davis, Goodison, Phillips, Gardner, Campbell-Ryce, Austin (J Johnson 82), King (Richards 73), Fuller (Cummings 71), Shelton.
Canada: Hirschfeld - De Jong, Cann, Hainault, Ledgerwood, Johnson, Pozniak, Harmse, Stalteri (Ornoch 65), Gbeke, Nakajima-Farran (Williams 69).

WC QUALS: C'CAF – 3RD STAGE – GP 2 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Honduras	6	4	0	2	9	5	12
Mexico	6	3	1	2	9	6	10
Jamaica	6	3	1	2	6	6	10
Canada	6	0	2	4	6	13	2

20.08.08 Canada-Jamaica..... 1-1
20.08.08 Mexico-Honduras..... 2-1
06.09.08 Canada-Honduras..... 1-2
06.09.08 Mexico-Jamaica 3-0
10.09.08 Honduras-Jamaica 2-0
10.09.08 Mexico-Canada..... 2-1
11.10.08 Honduras-Canada..... 3-1
11.10.08 Jamaica-Mexico 1-0
15.10.08 Canada-Mexico..... 2-2
15.10.08 Jamaica-Honduras 1-0
19.11.08 Honduras-Mexico..... 1-0
19.11.08 Jamaica-Canada..... 3-0

Group 3

Nov 19 - San Salvador
El Salvador 1 (Corrales 17)
Costa Rica 3 (Myrie 23, 90, Fernandez 29)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Petrescu (Can)
El Salvador: Gomez - Hernandez, M Gonzalez, Sanchez, Flores (Torres 46), Coreas, Quintanilla (Romero 64), Salazar, Corrales, Pacheco, Castillo (Reyes 58).
Costa Rica: R Gonzalez - Montero, Fernandez, Borges, Myrie, Rojas, Saborio (J L Lopez 56), Centeno, Ledezma (Alonso 73), Segares (Brenes 13), Sunsing.

Nov 19 - Paramaribo
Surinam 1 (Christoph 40)
Haiti 1 (Saint-Preux 28)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 800. **Ref:** Rodriguez (Mex)
Surinam: Aloema - Jap a Joe, Felter, Jeroe, Garden, Van Dijk (Sordam 29), Aroepa (Limon 63), Sastromedjo, Jomena, Sandvliet, Christoph.
Haiti: Clervin - Gregory, Germain (Vubert 74), Jerome, Frantz, Phillipe (Monuma 46), Saint-Preux, Boucicault, Bruny, Raymond, Sampeur (Guerrier 86).

WC QUALS: C'CAF – 3RD STAGE – GP 3 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Costa Rica	6	6	0	0	20	3	18
El Salvador	6	3	1	2	11	4	10
Haiti	6	0	3	3	4	13	3
Surinam	6	0	2	4	4	19	2

20.08.08 Costa Rica-El Salvador 1-0
20.08.08 Haiti-Surinam..... 2-2
06.09.08 Costa Rica-Surinam..... 7-0
06.09.08 El Salvador-Haiti 5-0
10.09.08 Haiti-Costa Rica 1-3
10.09.08 Surinam-El Salvador 0-2
11.10.08 Haiti-El Salvador 0-0
11.10.08 Surinam-Costa Rica..... 1-4
15.10.08 Costa Rica-Haiti 2-0
15.10.08 El Salvador-Surinam 3-0
19.11.08 El Salvador-Costa Rica..... 1-3
19.11.08 Surinam-Haiti..... 1-1

Top two in each group qualified for the 4th stage

4th stage fixtures
11.02.09 Costa Rica-Honduras
11.02.09 El Salvador-Trinidad & Tob
11.02.09 United States-Mexico
28.03.09 El Salvador-United States
28.03.09 Mexico-Costa Rica
28.03.09 Trinidad & Tob-Honduras
01.04.09 Costa Rica-El Salvador
01.04.09 Honduras-Mexico
01.04.09 United States-Trinidad & Tob
03.06.09 Costa Rica-United States
06.06.09 El Salvador-Mexico
06.06.09 Trinidad & Tob-Costa Rica
06.06.09 United States-Honduras
10.06.09 Honduras-El Salvador
10.06.09 Mexico-Trinidad & Tob
12.08.09 Honduras-Costa Rica
12.08.09 Mexico-United States
12.08.09 Trinidad & Tob-El Salvador

Top three qualify for the finals. The fourth-placed country will play off against the fifth-placed South American country for a place in the finals

EUROPE
Group 1

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Hungary	4	2	1	1	4	2	7
Portugal	4	1	2	1	6	3	5
Albania	4	1	2	1	3	2	5
Sweden	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
Malta	4	0	0	4	0	11	0

Next fixtures
11.02.09 Malta-Albania
28.03.09 Albania-Hungary
28.03.09 Malta-Denmark
28.03.09 Portugal-Sweden
01.04.09 Denmark-Albania
01.04.09 Hungary-Malta

Group 2

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Greece	4	3	0	1	9	2	9
Israel	4	2	2	0	8	5	8
Switzerland	4	2	1	1	7	6	7
Latvia	4	1	1	2	4	6	4
Luxembourg	4	1	1	2	3	7	4
Moldova	4	0	1	3	2	7	1

Next fixtures
28.03.09 Israel-Greece
28.03.09 Luxembourg-Latvia
28.03.09 Moldova-Switzerland
01.04.09 Greece-Israel
01.04.09 Latvia-Luxembourg
01.04.09 Switzerland-Moldova

Group 3

Nov 19 - Serravalle
San Marino 0
Czech Republic 3 (Kovac 47, Pospech 53, Necid 83)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Kaasik (Est)
San Marino: A Simoncini - Bacciocchi, Della Valle, D Simoncini, Bonini, Michele Marani (Cibelli 81), Vannucci, Muccioli (Andreini 70), Berretti, Manuel Marani, Vitaioli (Rinaldi 88).
Czech Republic: Zitka - Pospech, Ujfalusi, Rozehnal, Jankulovski, Sionko, Kovac, Polak (Jarolim 70), Sirl, Baros (Bednar 81), Fenin (Necid 66).

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 3	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slovakia	4	3	0	1	8	5	9
Czech Rep	4	2	1	1	5	2	7
Poland	4	2	1	1	6	4	7
Slovenia	4	2	1	1	5	3	7
N Ireland	4	1	1	2	5	4	4
San Marino	4	0	0	4	1	12	0

Next fixtures
11.02.09 San Marino-Northern Ireland
28.03.09 Northern Ireland-Poland
28.03.09 Slovenia-Czech Rep
01.04.09 Czech Rep-Slovakia
01.04.09 Northern Ireland-Slovenia
01.04.09 Poland-San Marino

Group 4

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 4	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	4	3	1	0	12	4	10
Russia	3	2	0	1	6	3	6
Wales	4	2	0	2	4	3	6
Finland	3	1	1	1	4	6	4
Azerbaijan	3	0	1	2	0	2	1
Liechtenstein	3	0	1	2	0	8	1

Next fixtures
28.03.09 Germany-Liechtenstein
28.03.09 Russia-Azerbaijan
28.03.09 Wales-Finland
01.04.09 Liechtenstein-Russia
01.04.09 Wales-Germany

Group 5

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 5	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	4	4	0	0	10	1	12
Turkey	4	2	2	0	5	2	8
Belgium	4	2	1	1	7	5	7
Bosnia-Herz	4	2	0	2	12	4	6
Estonia	4	0	1	3	2	13	1
Armenia	4	0	0	4	1	12	0

Next fixtures
28.03.09 Armenia-Estonia
28.03.09 Belgium-Bosnia-Herzegovina
28.03.09 Spain-Turkey
01.04.09 Bosnia-Herzegovina-Belgium
01.04.09 Estonia-Armenia
01.04.09 Turkey-Spain

Group 6

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 6	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	4	4	0	0	14	3	12
Croatia	4	2	1	1	8	4	7
Ukraine	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Belarus	3	1	0	2	4	5	3
Kazakhstan	4	1	0	3	5	11	3
Andorra	4	0	0	4	1	12	0

Next fixtures
01.04.09 Andorra-Croatia
01.04.09 England-Ukraine
01.04.09 Kazakhstan-Belarus

Group 7

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 7	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Serbia	4	3	0	1	9	3	9
Lithuania	4	3	0	1	6	3	9
France	3	1	1	1	5	6	4
Austria	4	1	1	2	5	7	4
Romania	3	1	1	1	3	5	4
Faroe Islands	4	0	1	3	1	5	1

Next fixtures
28.03.09 Lithuania-France
28.03.09 Romania-Serbia
01.04.09 Austria-Romania
01.04.09 France-Lithuania

Group 8

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 8	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	4	3	1	0	6	2	10
Rep Ireland	3	2	1	0	3	1	7
Bulgaria	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
Montenegro	3	0	2	1	3	4	2
Georgia	4	0	2	2	2	5	2
Cyprus	3	0	1	2	2	4	1

Next fixtures
11.02.09 Rep Ireland-Georgia
28.03.09 Cyprus-Georgia
28.03.09 Montenegro-Italy
28.03.09 Rep Ireland-Bulgaria
01.04.09 Bulgaria-Cyprus
01.04.09 Georgia-Montenegro
01.04.09 Italy-Rep Ireland

Group 9

WC QUALS: EUROPE – GROUP 9	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Holland	3	3	0	0	5	1	9
Scotland	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Iceland	4	1	1	2	4	6	4
Macedonia	3	1	0	2	2	3	3
Norway	3	0	2	1	2	3	2

Next fixtures
28.03.09 Holland-Scotland
01.04.09 Holland-Macedonia
01.04.09 Scotland-Iceland

Group winners qualify for the finals. The best eight runners-up will be drawn in four play-off ties, the winners of which will also qualify for the finals

OCEANIA
2nd stage

*Nov 19 - Lautoka, Fiji**
New Zealand 0
Fiji 2 (Krishna 63, 90)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Fred (Van)
**Tie played in Fiji because the New Zealand authorities refused to grant Fiji keeper Simione Tamanisau a visa for the tie, originally scheduled to be played in Auckland in October*
New Zealand: Moss - Mulligan, Christie, Sigmund, Old, Bertos, Peverley, Brockie, Draper (Spoonley 59), Pritchett, Barbarouses (Bright 68). *Sent off: Moss 59min.*
Fiji: Tamanisau - Naqeleca, Finau, Singh, Tuilau, Baleitoga, Vakatalesau (Manuca 77), Krishna, Salesh Kumar, Tiwa, Kainihewe (Vonu 46).

WC QUALS: OCEANIA – 2ND STAGE – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
New Zealand	6	5	0	1	14	5	15
New Caledonia	6	2	2	2	12	10	8
Fiji	6	2	1	3	8	11	7
Vanuatu	6	1	1	4	5	13	4

17.10.07 Fiji-New Zealand 0-2
17.11.07 Fiji-New Caledonia 3-3
17.11.07 Vanuatu-New Zealand 1-2
21.11.07 New Caledonia-Fiji 4-0
21.11.07 New Zealand-Vanuatu 4-1
14.06.08 Vanuatu-New Caledonia 1-1
21.06.08 New Caledonia-Vanuatu 3-0
06.09.08 Fiji-Vanuatu 2-0
06.09.08 New Caledonia-New Zealand .. 1-3
10.09.08 New Zealand-New Caledonia .. 3-0
10.09.08 Vanuatu-Fiji 2-1
19.11.08 New Zealand-Fiji 0-2

As group winners, New Zealand will play off against the fifth-best Asian country for a place in the finals

SOUTH AMERICA

WC QUALS: SOUTH AMERICA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Paraguay	10	7	2	1	18	6	23
Brazil	10	4	5	1	15	4	17
Argentina	10	4	4	2	13	7	16
Chile	10	5	1	4	14	13	16
Uruguay	10	3	4	3	19	10	13
Ecuador	10	3	3	4	12	17	12
Colombia	10	2	5	3	4	8	11
Venezuela	10	3	1	6	12	18	10
Bolivia	10	2	3	5	13	22	9
Peru	10	1	4	5	5	20	7

Next fixtures
28.03.09 Argentina-Venezuela
28.03.09 Colombia-Bolivia
28.03.09 Ecuador-Brazil
28.03.09 Peru-Chile
28.03.09 Uruguay-Paraguay
01.04.09 Bolivia-Argentina
01.04.09 Brazil-Peru
01.04.09 Chile-Uruguay
01.04.09 Ecuador-Paraguay
01.04.09 Venezuela-Colombia

Top four qualify for the finals. The fifth-placed country will meet the fourth-placed CONCACAF country for a place in the finals

AFRICA
3rd stage draw & fixtures

Group A
Cameroon
Gabon
Morocco
Togo

28.03.09 Morocco-Gabon
28.03.09 Togo-Cameroon
06.06.09 Cameroon-Morocco
06.06.09 Gabon-Togo
20.06.09 Gabon-Cameroon
20.06.09 Morocco-Togo
05.09.09 Cameroon-Gabon
05.09.09 Togo-Morocco
10.10.09 Cameroon-Togo
10.10.09 Gabon-Morocco
14.11.09 Morocco-Cameroon
14.11.09 Togo-Gabon

Group B
Kenya
Mozambique
Nigeria
Tunisia

28.03.09 Kenya-Tunisia
28.03.09 Mozambique-Nigeria
06.06.09 Nigeria-Kenya
06.06.09 Tunisia-Mozambique
20.06.09 Kenya-Mozambique
20.06.09 Tunisia-Nigeria
05.09.09 Mozambique-Kenya
05.09.09 Nigeria-Tunisia
10.10.09 Nigeria-Mozambique
10.10.09 Tunisia-Kenya
14.11.09 Kenya-Nigeria
14.11.09 Mozambique-Tunisia

Group C
Algeria
Egypt
Rwanda
Zambia

28.03.09 Egypt-Zambia
28.03.09 Rwanda-Algeria
06.06.09 Algeria-Egypt
06.06.09 Zambia-Rwanda
20.06.09 Egypt-Rwanda
20.06.09 Zambia-Algeria
05.09.09 Algeria-Zambia
05.09.09 Rwanda-Egypt
10.10.09 Algeria-Rwanda
10.10.09 Zambia-Egypt
14.11.09 Egypt-Algeria
14.11.09 Rwanda-Zambia

Group D
Benin
Ghana
Mali
Sudan

28.03.09 Ghana-Benin
28.03.09 Sudan-Mali
06.06.09 Benin-Sudan
06.06.09 Mali-Ghana
20.06.09 Mali-Benin
20.06.09 Sudan-Ghana
05.09.09 Benin-Mali
05.09.09 Ghana-Sudan
10.10.09 Benin-Ghana
10.10.09 Mali-Sudan
14.11.09 Ghana-Mali
14.11.09 Sudan-Benin

Group E
Burkina Faso
Guinea
Ivory Coast
Malawi

28.03.09 Burkina Faso-Guinea
28.03.09 Ivory Coast-Malawi
06.06.09 Guinea-Ivory Coast
06.06.09 Malawi-Burkina Faso
20.06.09 Burkina Faso-Ivory Coast
20.06.09 Guinea-Malawi
05.09.09 Ivory Coast-Burkina Faso
05.09.09 Malawi-Guinea
10.10.09 Guinea-Burkina Faso
10.10.09 Malawi-Ivory Coast
14.11.09 Burkina Faso-Malawi
14.11.09 Ivory Coast-Guinea

Group winners qualify for the finals

CONCACAF GOLD CUP QUALIFIERS

CARIBBEAN ZONE
2nd stage

Group F*

GROUP F – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guadeloupe	3	3	0	0	12	3	9
Grenada	3	1	1	1	7	6	4
Martinique	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
Cayman Is	3	0	0	3	3	12	0

Group G*

GROUP G – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cuba	3	2	1	0	14	2	7
Barbados	3	2	1	0	6	4	7
Surinam	3	1	0	2	4	10	3
Dutch Antilles	3	0	0	3	3	11	0

Group H*
In Macoya, Trinidad

Nov 5
Guyana 1 (G Richardson 35)
St Kitts & Nevis 1 (Lake 29)
HT: 1-1

Nov 5
Trinidad & Tobago 3 (Glen 69, Dwarika 73, Toussaint 88)
Antigua & Barbuda 2 (Byers 34, Burton 90)
HT: 0-1

Nov 7
Antigua & Barbuda 2 (Leigertwood 11, Christian 78)
Guyana 1 (Jerome 45)
HT: 1-1

Nov 7
Trinidad & Tobago 3 (Daniel 37, Hyland 65, Jorsling 66)
St Kitts & Nevis 1 (J Francis 86)
HT: 1-0

Nov 9
St Kitts & Nevis 3 (J Francis 57, 70, 80)
Antigua & Barbuda 4 (Byers 8, pen 44, J Thomas 59, 73)
HT: 0-2
Sent off: Byron (St Kitts & Nevis) 44min; Cochrane (Antigua & Barbuda) 47min

Nov 9
Trinidad & Tobago 1 (Jorsling 85)
Guyana 1 (G Richardson pen 58)
HT: 0-0

GROUP H – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Trinidad & Tob	3	2	1	0	7	4	7
Antigua & B	3	2	0	1	8	7	6
Guyana	3	0	2	1	3	4	2
St Kitts & N	3	0	1	2	5	8	1

Top two in each group qualified for final stage, to which Jamaica (hosts) and Haiti (defending Caribbean champions) qualified automatically

**2nd stage groups carried the letters F, G and H because the 1st stage groups ran A to E*

T&T CUP

In Hanoi, Vietnam

Nov 16
Vietnam 2 (Nguyen Viet Thang 51, 88)
Thailand 2 (Nataporn 33, Teerasil 82)
HT: 0-1

T&T CUP – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Thailand	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Vietnam	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
North Korea	2	0	1	1	0	1	1

ESTONIA TOURNAMENT

Nov 18 - Tallinn
Estonia 1 (Voskoboinikov 56)
Moldova 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Larsen (Den)
Estonia: Kotenko - Jaager, Rahn, Klavan, Piiroja, Vassiljev (Konsa 81), Vunk, Dmitrijev, Lindpere, Voskoboinikov (Viikmae 85), Kink (Puri 90).
Moldova: Stanislav Namasco (Copeliciuc 84) - Lascencov, Epureanu, Armas, Golovatenco, Tigirlas (I Andronic 66), Onica, V Andronic (Corneencov 69), Frantuz (Gorceac 79), Bugaiov (O Andronic 62), Ovseannicov (Picusciac 79).

Nov 19 - Tallinn
Lithuania 1 (Savenas pen 73)
Moldova 1 (Bugaiov 65)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 100. **Ref:** Tohver
Lithuania: Grybauskas (Arlauskis 46) - Paulauskas, Skerla, Zaliukas (Tamosauskas 74), Stankevicius, Sernas (Luksa 70), Miceika (Palionis 46), Kalonas (Beniusis 60), Savenas (Tomkevicius 89), Ivaskevicius, Velicka.
Moldova: Calancea - Savinov, Lascencov, Golovatenco (O Andronic 84), Epureanu, Onica (Armas 65), I Andronic (Suvorov 65), Frantuz (V Andronic 51), Corneencov, Bulat (Gorceac 86), Ovseannicov (Bugaiov 57).

Nov 22 - Kuressaare
Estonia 1 (Puri 6)
Lithuania 1 (Kavaliauskas 35)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 1,000. **Ref:** Nieminen (Fin)
Estonia: Aksalu - Sisov, Barengrub (Rahn 41), Piiroja, Kams (Kink 46), Puri, Vunk, Anniste, Konsa (Jaager 46), Saag (Voskoboinikov 69), Viikmae.
Lithuania: Vitkauskas - Slavickas (Paulauskas 46), Zelmikas, Rimavicius, Mikuckis, Sernas (Luksa 75), Savenas (Tamosauskas 63), Miceika (Panka 63), Ivaskevicius, Kavaliauskas (Beniusis 74), Trakys.

ESTONIA TOURNAMENT – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Estonia	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Lithuania	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Moldova	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

FRIENDLIES

Saturday, November 8

Saudi Arabia 1 (Hazazi 65)
Thailand 0
HT: 0-0
Sent off: Surat (Thailand) 70min

Sunday, November 9

Nov 9 - Georgetown
Cayman Islands 0
Jamaica 2 (Cummings 42, Dean 58)
HT: 0-1
Jamaica: S Sawyers - J Taylor, Moodie, Vernan (Breakenridge), Laing, Austin, Cousins, Finlayson (E Taylor), Hue (Campbell), Cummings, Watson (Dean).

Nov 9 - Doha
Qatar 0
Iran 1 (Rezaei 74)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Al-Harrassi (Oma)
Qatar: Saqar - Montesin, Abdulrab, Ismael, Khalfan, Al-Bloushi, Abdulmajed (Al-Haidoos 82), Mussabiuh, Yousif, Mohammed, Soria (Amaral 82).
Iran: Mehdi Rahmati (Talebloo 46) - Kaebi, Ghorbani, Hosseini, S Zare (Sayed Salehi 56), M Zare (Majeed Rahmati 70), Bagheri, Nouri (Baeo 56), Khalatbary (Ale Nemeh 56), Rezaei, Rafkhaei (Gholamnejad 56).

Tuesday, November 11

*Nov 11 - Yangon**
Myanmar 0
Bangladesh 0
**Part of Grand Royal Challenge Cup, which also featured a non-A selection and a club side*

Wednesday, November 12

Nov 12 - Tallinn
Estonia 1 (Kink 52)
Latvia 1 (Grebis 75)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Sandmoen (Nor)
Estonia: Pareiko - Kams (Sisov 60), Barengrub, Piiroja, Sidorenkov, Viikmae (Lindpere 73), Anniste (Dmitrijev 60), Vunk, Puri, Kink (Konsa 87), Voskoboinikov (Saag 60).
Latvia: Vanins (Kolinko 46) - Klava (Zirnis 46), Astafjevs, Savcenkovs, Ivanovs, Kacanovs, Visnakovs (Blanks 62), Cauna, Kolesnicenko (Solonicins 68), Rudnevs (Grebis 62), Karlsons (J Laizans 33).

Nov 12 - Phoenix, USA
Mexico 2 (Lopez 50, Vuoso 90)
Ecuador 1 (I Mina 8)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 25,587. **Ref:** Prus (USA)
Mexico: G Ochoa - Rojas (Lopez 46), D Martinez, Duenas, Pinto, Torrado (Correa 67), Arce (I Martinez 46), Torres (Naelson 46), N Castillo (Villaluz 72), Fonseca (E Castillo 58), Vuoso.
Ecuador: Banguera - Gamez, Checa, I Mina (N Mina 46), Guagua, Quinonez, Hidalgo, W Ayovi (Pinto 90), Saritama (Guevara 90), Palacios (Rojas 89), Bolanos (Nazareno 86).

Nov 12 - Riyadh
Saudi Arabia 4 (Bin Sultan 25, Hazazi 29, 57, Tukar pen 90)
Bahrain 0
HT: 2-0

Thursday, November 13

*Nov 13 - Yangon**
Bangladesh 0
Indonesia 2 (Firman 10, Talaohu 45)
HT: 0-2
**Part of Grand Royal Challenge Cup*

Nov 13 - Kobe
Japan 3 (Nagatomo 3, Tamada 26, Okubo 62)
Syria 1 (Al-Zeno pen 78)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 25,004. **Ref:** Choi (SKo)
Japan: Kawaguchi - Terada (Konno 46), Tulio Tanaka (Takagi 56), Abe, Nagatomo, Uchida (Komano 78), K Nakamura, Tamada (H Sato 46), Okubo (Maki 68), Tatsuya Tanaka (Kagawa 46), Okazaki.
Syria: Balhous (Al-Azhar 68) - Jenyat (Al-Agha 81), Daka, Diab, Ismail (Al-Amna 51), Ayan, Abdullah, Shaabo (Al-Zeno 46), Rafe, Al-Rashid (Al-Aitouni 46), Al-Said (Sahiwine 63).

Friday, November 14

Nov 14 - Wattayah
Oman 2 (Rabia 33, 64)
Jordan 0
HT: 1-0

Nov 14 - Doha
Qatar 1 (Montesin 73)
South Korea 1 (Lee Chung-yong 6)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,000
Qatar: Saqar - Al-Hamad, Siddiq (Lamy 90), Mobarak, Montesin, Ibrahim (Abdulrab 83), Al-Bloushi, Majed, Ahmed (Ismael 78), Soria, Mohamed.
South Korea: Lee Woon-jae (Jung Sung-ryong 74) - Cho Won-hee, Cho Yong-hyung, Kang Min-soo, Kim Chi-woo (Ha Dae-sung 46), Kim Jung-woo (Choi Hyo-jin 46), Ki Sung-yeung (Seo Dong-hyeon 46), Yeon Ki-hun (Song Jung-hyun 59), Lee Chung-yong (Kim Hyeung-bum 56), Lee Keun-ho (Lim You-hwan 78), Jeong Sung-hoon (Kim Chi-gon 46).

Saturday, November 15

*Nov 15 - Yangon**
Myanmar 2 (Yan Paing 43, 64)
Indonesia 1 (Ismed 38)
HT: 1-1
**Part of Grand Royal Challenge Cup*

Tuesday, November 18

Nov 18 - Rouen, France
Algeria 1 (Abdeslam 90)
Mali 1 (Diabate 12)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Dominique
Algeria: Gaouaoui (Ousserir 46) - Raho, Meniri, Yahia (Zaoui 46), Belhadj, Abdeslam, Mansouri, Djediat, Matmour (Seguer 70), Ghezzal (Hemani 70), Ghilas.
Mali: Sissoko (S Diakite 56) - Camara (A Keita 60), Diamoutene, Magassa, A Sidibe, Yattabare, Sidi Keita, Tambadou, Maiga (C Diarra 81), Ndiaye, Diabate (B Diakite 68).

Nov 18 - Compiegne, France
Gabon 3 (Nguema pen 13, 55, Mouloungui 30)
Guinea 3 (Keita 7, Kalabane 36, Ismael Bangoura pen 75)
HT: 2-2

*Nov 18 - Yangon**
Myanmar 4 (Soe Myat Min 25, 45, 89, Aung Kyaw Moe 90)
Malaysia 1 (Zainal 75)
HT: 2-0
**Part of Grand Royal Challenge Cup*

Wednesday, November 19

Nov 19 - Vienna
Austria 2 (Holzl 28, 53)
Turkey 4 (Mehmet Aurelio 38, Tuncay 41, 47, 62)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 23,100. **Ref:** Grafe (Ger)
Austria: Gspurning - Garics (Arnautovic 46), Stranzl, Scharner (Prodl 87), Ibertsberger (Standfest 46), Holzl, Leitgeb (Stankovic 71), Saumel (Aufhauser 64), Fuchs, Ivanschitz, Okotie (Hoffer 46).
Turkey: Volkan - Gokhan Gonul, Gokhan Zan, Eren, Hakan Balta, Kazim (Sinan 84), Sabri (Serkan 69), Mehmet Aurelio (Selcuk 87), Ayhan (Nuri 80), Tuncay (Caner 72), Mehmet Yildiz (Halil Altintop 46).

Nov 19 - Baku
Azerbaijan 1 (Subasic 4)
Albania 1 (Skela 12)
HT: 1-1
Azerbaijan: Mehdijev (Veliev 46) - Yunisoglu, Shukurov, Chertoganov (Abdilayev 79), Abasov, Subasic (Nadirov 69), Nduka (Dzhaligov 46), Sadigov, Mamedov (Gusenov 46), Zeinalov, Dzhavadov.
Albania: Hidi - Dallku, Beqiri, Curri, Vangjeli (Lila 46), Agolli, Vrapi, Bulku (Muzaka 90), Duro (Lika 72), Skela, Berisha (Sukaj 85). *Sent off: Beqiri 44min.*

Nov 19 - Gama
Brazil 6 (Luis Fabiano 8, 25, 58, Maicon 56, Elano 65, Adriano 89)
Portugal 2 (Danny 4, Simao 62)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 19,157. **Ref:** Larrionda (Uru)
Brazil: Julio Cesar - Maicon (Daniel Alves 78), Luisao, Thiago Silva, Kleber (Marcelo 81), Gilberto Silva, Anderson (Josue 79), Elano (Mancini 76), Kaka, Luis Fabiano (Adriano 67), Robinho (Alex 82).
Portugal: Quim - Bosingwa, Bruno Alves, Pepe, Paulo Ferreira, Maniche (Cesar Peixoto 84), Tiago (Raul Meireles 46), Deco (Joao Moutinho 67), Danny (Nani 46), Simao (Hugo Almeida 77), Cristiano Ronaldo.

Nov 19 - Cali
Colombia 1 (Falcao Garcia 82)
Nigeria 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Duarte (Col)
Colombia: Julio (Ospina 46) - Zuniga, L Perea, Yepes, Armero, Escobar (Marrugo 46), Guarin, Toja (Anchico 71), Hernandez (G Moreno 71), Quintero (Herrera 74), Falcao Garcia (Bedoya 84).
Nigeria: Ejide - Odiah, Shittu, Onyekachi, Taiwo, Kaita, Aiyegbeni (Akpala 62), Obodo (Okoronkwo 62), I Uche (K Uche 62), Kanu (Ajilore 79), Nwaneri. *Sent off: Kaita 86min.*

Nov 19 - Nicosia
Cyprus 2 (Christofi 29, Avraam 48)
Belarus 1 (Kovel 55)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 300. **Ref:** Kenan (Isr)
Cyprus: Georgallides - Christou, A Constantinou (Charalambous 46), Satsias (Pavlou 77), Panagi, Michael, Garpozis (Okkarides 66), Christofi (Papathanasiou 81), Aloneftis (Avraam 46), Okkas, M Constantinou (Nicolaou 61).
Belarus: Zhevnov - Korytko, Filipenko, Verkhovtsov, Sitko (Strakhanovich 61), Molosh (Omelyanchuk 61), Kulchy, Pavlov (Putsila 54), A Hleb, Kovel, Bulyga.

Nov 19 - Brondby
Denmark 0
Wales 1 (Bellamy 77)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,271. **Ref:** Weiner (Ger)
Denmark: T Sorensen - Bogelund (Andreasen 46), Kroldrup (Mathias Jorgensen 60), Agger, T Rasmussen (Mtiliga 46), Norregaard, Kristensen (Retov 71), Nordstrand (Larsen 46), Bendtner, Rommedahl, Krohn-Dehli (Vingaard 60).
Wales: Myhill - Bale (Eardley 87), Nyatanga, Gunter, Edwards (Ricketts 46), Collison, J Collins, Williams, Ramsey (Tudur Jones 88), C Evans (Vokes 60), Bellamy.

Nov 19 - Cairo
Egypt 5 (Abd Rabou pen 21, Moteab 27, 41, Aboutraika 43, 74)
Benin 1 (Omotoyossi 85)
HT: 4-0
Egypt: El-Hadary (A W El-Sayed) - Al-Mohammadi, Gomaa, Said (Reyadh), A El-Sayed, Farag, Soliman (Abdelmalek), Shaaban (Awad), Abd Rabou, Aboutraika (Abdel Ghani), Moteab (Hassan).

Nov 19 - Saint-Denis
France 0
Uruguay 0
Att: 79,666. **Ref:** Zimmermann (Swi)
France: Lloris - Fanni, Mexes, Gallas, Evra, Toulalan, Vieira (A Diarra 46), Ribery (Benzema 58), Gourcuff (Nasri 72), Henry (Briand 72), Anelka (Savidan 46).
Uruguay: Carini - B Silva, Lugano, Godin (Valdez 19), Caceres, M Pereira, Gargano, C Rodriguez (Sanchez 82), A Pereira (Cardaccio 71), Forlan (Cavani 46), Suarez (Abreu 69).

Nov 19 - Berlin
Germany 1 (Helmes 63)
England 2 (Upson 23, Terry 84)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 74,244. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Germany: Adler (Wiese 46) - A Friedrich (Tasci 68), Mertesacker, Westermann, Compper (Schafer 77), Jones (Marin 46), Rolfes, Schweinsteiger, Trochowski, Klose (Helmes 46), Gomez (Podolski 57).
England: James (Carson 46) - G Johnson, Terry, Upson, Bridge, Carrick, Barry, Wright-Phillips (Crouch 90), Downing, Agbonlahor (A Young 77), Defoe (Bent 46).

Nov 19 - Accra
Ghana 0
Tunisia 0
Att: 25,000
Ghana: Kingson - Quartey, E Addo, Paintsil, Sarpei (Inkoom 75), Appiah, Kyere (Dramani 46), D Yeboah, Ayew (Owusu-Abeyie 64), M Amoah (S Yeboah 73), Tagoe (Agogo 46).
Tunisia: Kasraoui - Ghezal, Ben Zekri, Boussaidi, Iffa, Saihi (Nafkha 46), Ben Yahya (Souissi 87), Ragued, Belaid (Mejdi 46), Zitouni (Selliti 46; Darragi 65), Allagui (Jomaa 46).

Nov 19 - Piraeus
Greece 1 (Gekas 50)
Italy 1 (Toni 54)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Webb (Eng)
Greece: Tsorvas - Vyntra, Papastathopoulos, Dellas, Spyropoulos, Salpigidis (Ninis 88), Tziolis, Basinas (Pliatsikas 86), Katsouranis, Karagounis (Gekas 46), Mantzios (Limberopoulos 46).
Italy: De Sanctis - Bonera, Cannavaro (Gamberini 61), Chiellini (Legrottaglie 46), Grosso, Gattuso, De Rossi, Camoranesi (Maggio 61), Montolivo (Pepe 46), Rossi (Iaquinta 69), Toni (Gilardino 61).

Nov 19 - Amsterdam
Holland 3 (Van Persie 32, 48, Kuijt 90)
Sweden 1 (Kallstrom 50)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 26,750. **Ref:** Szabo (Hun)
Holland: Timmer (Vorm 46) - Heitinga (Mendes da Silva 77), Mathijsen, Ooijer, Van Bronckhorst (De Cler 46), Van Persie, De Zeeuw (Van der Vaart 46), Sneijder (Engelaar 74), Van Bommel, Babel (Afellay 64), Kuijt.
Sweden: Isaksson - M Nilsson, P Hansson (Granqvist 80), Majstorovic, Safari (Stoor 46), Wilhelmsson (Rosenberg 46), D Andersson (S Larsson 46), Lindgren, Holmen (V Elm 76), H Larsson (Kallstrom 46), Berg.

Nov 19 - Tel Aviv
Israel 2 (Barda 18, Golan 24)
Ivory Coast 2 (Strul og 33, Sanogo 85)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 27,167. **Ref:** Trefoloni (Ita)
Israel: Awat (Strauber 46) - Strul, Saban, Ben Haim (Keinan 61), Ziv (Meshumar 20), Toema (Baruchian 46), Benayoun, Kayal, Alberman, Barda (Buzaglo 67), Golan (Colautti 46).
Ivory Coast: Barry - Bamba, Boka (Tiene 46), Demel, Manfredini (Cisse 46), Zokora, Fae, Lolo (Brou 60), Gosso, Drogba (Sanogo 60), S Kalou.

Nov 19 - Luxembourg
Luxembourg 1 (Mutsch 47)
Belgium 1 (Mirallas 22)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 4,172. **Ref:** Riley (Eng)
Luxembourg: Joubert - Martino (Kintziger 72), Strasser (Lombardelli 90), Payal, Hoffmann, Wagner, Bettmer (Gerson 67), Peters, Bossi (A Leweck 46), Bensi (Kitenge 46), Mutsch.
Belgium: Proto - Vanden Borre, Van Buyten, Simons (Simaeys 67), Vermaelen (Daems 46), Gillet (Overmeire 84), Vertonghen (Van Damme 46), Mirallas (De Sutter 75), Martens, Huysegems, Sonck (Hazard 67).

Nov 19 - Macau
Macau 1
Hong Kong 9
HT: 0-5

Nov 19 - Corradino
Malta 0
Iceland 1 (Helguson 65)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Demarco (Ita)
Malta: Hogg (M Muscat 46) - Scicluna (Briffa 46), Failla, Said, A Agius, Bogdanovic, M Mifsud, Woods (A Muscat 46), Mallia (Fenech 46), Schembri (Azzopardi 70), Barbara (Mifsud Triganza 76).
Iceland: Gunnleifsson (Arason 46) - B Saevarsson, I Sigurdsson (Eiriksson 75), Danielsson, Ottesen Jonsson, Smarason, Hreidarsson, A Gunnarsson (Johannsson 68), Helguson (Vidarsson 68), V Gunnarsson (Palmason 46), Hallfredsson (Steinarsson 80).

Nov 19 - Podgorica
Montenegro 2 (Dzudovic 24, Jovetic pen 33)
Macedonia 1 (Popov 85)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Panic (Bos)
Montenegro: Poleksic (M Bozovic 46) - Pavicevic (Delic 80), Dzudovic, Ognjanovic, Pejovic (Novakovic 56), Zverotic (Simovic 90), Boskovic (Jovanovic 70), Cetkovic (Vujovic 54), V Bozovic, Jovetic (Vucinic 80), Djalovic (Vukcevic 76).
Macedonia: P Milosevski (Pacovski 74) - Noveski (Mojsov 46), Popov, I Mitreski, Grncarov (Vasoski 74), Sumulikoski, Trajanov, Pandev (Tasevski 46), Naumoski (Maznov 46), D Milosevski (Stojkov 46), Lazarevski (Grozdanovski 46).

Nov 19 - Casablanca
Morocco 3 (Kharja 3, Sektioui pen 24, Baha 62)
Zambia 0
HT: 2-0
Morocco: Zaza - Erbate, Rabeh (Benatia 67), El Kaddouri (El Akchaoui 58), Abdessadki (Serraj 67), Safri, Kharja (Erraki 86), Dirar (El Ahmadi 65), Sektioui (Aboucherouane 46), Hadji (Zemmama 46), Chamakh (Baha 46).
Zambia: Kakonje - J Mulenga (Kampamba 65), Musonda, Tana, Himoude, C Mulenga, C Katongo, Chinuta (Mauka 70), Kalaba (Sunzu 70), Hachipoka, Sakuwaha.

Nov 19 - Belfast
Northern Ireland 0
Hungary 2 (Torghelle 57, Gera 71)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,251. **Ref:** Schorgenhofer (Aut)
Northern Ireland: Taylor (Tuffey 46) - Duff (McGinn 55), Evans, McGivern, Baird, O'Connor (Shiels 82), Brunt (Paterson 70), Clingan, Gillespie, Healy (Thompson 88), Lafferty (Feeney 46).
Hungary: Babos - Bodnar, Vanczak, Juhasz, Halmosi, Vadocz, Toth (Dardai 88), Huszti (Dzsudzsak 84), Gera, Torghelle (Feczesin 82), Rudolf.

Nov 19 - Muscat
Oman 0
Paraguay 1 (Vera 37)
HT: 0-1

Nov 19 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 2 (S Hunt pen 88, Andrews 90)
Poland 3 (M Lewandowski 3, Guerreiro 47, R Lewandowski 89)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 50,566. **Ref:** Jakobsson (Ice)
Rep Ireland: Given - Dunne, Kilbane, O'Shea, McShane (Bruce 59), Gibson (Andrews 72), Whelan, Keogh (S Hunt 60), Duff (Long 67), Doyle (N Hunt 60), Folan.
Poland: Fabianski - Wawrzyniak, Dudka, Bosacki, Wasilewski, Krzynowek (Jodlowiec 81), Blaszczykowski (Guerreiro 46), Gargula, M Lewandowski, Boguski (Peszko 70), Pawel Brozek (R Lewandowski 46).

Nov 19 - Bucharest
Romania 2 (Marica 62, Goian 70)
Georgia 1 (Martsvaladze 12)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Vassaras (Gre)
Romania: Lobont (Pantilimon 46) - Ogararu (Panin 29), Tamas (Goian 46), Radoi, Rat, Lazar (Ropotan 46), Nicolita (Bucur 60), Cocis, Tames (Tanase 46), Costea, Marica.
Georgia: Lomaia - Gvinianidze (Shashiashvili 46), Salukvadze, Kvakhadze, Kandelaki, Razmadze, Kobiashvili (Khmaladze 69), Daushvili, Gotsiridze (Merebashvili 75), Aleksidze (Mchedlidze 57), Martsvaladze (Odikadze 61).

Nov 19 - Glasgow
Scotland 0
Argentina 1 (M Rodriguez 8)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 32,492. **Ref:** Brych (Ger)
Scotland: McGregor - Hutton, G Caldwell, McManus (Berra 75), Broadfoot, Brown (G Alexander 83), Hartley (Maloney 59), Ferguson (Robertson 59), Commons, McFadden (Clarkson 67), Iwelumo (L Miller 46).
Argentina: Carrizo - Zanetti, Demichelis, Heinze, Papa (Diaz 86), M Rodriguez (Sosa 90), Mascherano, Gago, J Gutierrez (L Gonzalez 70), Tevez, Lavezzi (Denis 74).

Nov 19 - Belgrade
Serbia 6 (Jovanovic 9, 25, Milosevic 27, 33, Milijas 34, Lazovic 56)
Bulgaria 1 (Georgiev 20)
HT: 4-1. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Sippel (Ger)
Serbia: Disljenkovic - Lukovic, Kolarov, Ivanovic (Djuric 60), Vidic (Rukavina 60), Stankovic (Ergic 60), Milijas (Z Tosic 60), Krasic, Milosevic (Mrdja 38), Jovanovic (Kacar 46), Lazovic.
Bulgaria: G Petkov - Milanov (Manolev 46), Tunchev (Kotev 46), Venkov (Minev 69), Iliev, S Petrov (Stoyanov 65), Georgiev, Yankov (Yanev 46), Rangelov, Dimitrov, Berbatov (Genkov 30).

Nov 19 - Zilina
Slovakia 4 (Hamsik 43, 72, Vittek 75, Jez 90)
Liechtenstein 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 2,010. **Ref:** Oriekhov (Ukr)
Slovakia: Mucha - Pekarik (Jez 46), Cisovsky, Zabavnik, Cech, Kozak, Borbely, Hamsik (Dolezaj 74), Obzera (Kucka 53), Jakubko (Vittek 67), Svento (Holosko 46).
Liechtenstein: Jehle (B Buchel 80) - Ritzberger, Oehri, Martin Stocklasa, Michael Stocklasa, Rohrer (Christen 46), Polverino (R Buchel 46), M Buchel, F Burgmeier (R Beck 46), M Frick, Fischer (Vogt 79).

Nov 19 - Maribor
Slovenia 3 (Koren 27, Novakovic pen 64, 75)
Bosnia-Herzegovina 4 (Ibisevic 2, 62, Misimovic pen 11, Dzeko 53)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Kari (Fin)
Slovenia: S Handanovic (J Handanovic 51) - Brecko (Ilic 80), Komac (Radosavljevic 68), Cesar, Morec, Sisic (Birsa 46), Koren, Novakovic, Jokic, Dedic (Burgic 54), Kirm (Mejac 74).
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Brasnic - Berberovic (Zec 77), Muratovic, Damjanovic, Misimovic, Dzeko (Bartolovic 88), Mravac, Ibisevic, Salihovic (Muslimovic 72), Mikelini (Saraba 70), Ibricic.

Nov 19 - Rustenburg
South Africa 3 (Modise 7, 24, Parker 81)
Cameroon 2 (Ngom Kome 28, Tchoyi 36)
HT: 2-2
South Africa: Khune - Gaxa, Booth, A Mokoena, Masilela, Modise, Davids, Sibaya (Dikgacoi 84), Tshabalala, Nkosi (Parker 39), McCarthy (Mphela; Mbuyane 73).
Cameroon: Kameni - Binya, Nicolas, Ngambi, Kana, Mbami, Djemba-Djemba, Makoun (Essame 58), Tchoyi (Songo'o 73), Ngom Kome, Meyong (Webo 52).

Nov 19 - Villarreal
Spain 3 (Villa pen 37, Fernando Torres 66, Cazorla 86)
Chile 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Vadachkoria (Geo)
Spain: Casillas (Reina 46) - Sergio Ramos (Arbeloa 61), Albiol, Puyol (Marchena 46), Capdevila, Senna (Cazorla 46), Xabi Alonso, Fabregas, Xavi (Llorente 70), Riera, Villa (Fernando Torres 57).
Chile: Bravo - Alvarez, Ponce, I Fuentes, Tello, Carmona, Isla, Fernandez, Orellana, Suazo (Valdivia 87), Sanchez.

Nov 19 - St Gallen
Switzerland 1 (Ziegler 84)
Finland 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 11,500. **Ref:** Kulbakov (Bls)
Switzerland: Wolfli - Lichtsteiner (Eggimann 46), Djourou (Abdi 78), Grichting, Ziegler, Fernandes (Behrami 46), Dzemaili, Inler, Barnetta (Stocker 46), Frei (Yakin 63), Nkufo (Derdiyok 46).
Finland: Jaaskelainen (Fredrikson 46) - Lampi, Tihinen, Hyypia, Moisander (Kallio 72), Hamalainen (R Eremenko 46), Heikkinen, Tainio (Pohja 90), Kolkka (Porokara 78), Vayrynen (Litmanen 64), Tarvajarvi.

Nov 19 - Dar es Salaam
Tanzania 1 (Makasi 78)
Mozambique 0
HT: 0-0

Nov 19 - Lome
Togo 1 (Ayite 33)
Rwanda 0
HT: 1-0

Nov 19 - Dnipropetrovsk
Ukraine 1 (Selezniov pen 26)
Norway 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Lajuks (Lat)
Ukraine: Bogush - Mandzyuk, Kucher (Krasnoporov 58), Rusol (Chygrynskyi 56), Shevchuk, Kravchenko, Valyaev, Sliusar (Gai 69), Nazarenko (Aliyev 46), Homenyuk (Devic 46), Selezniov (Milevskyi 46).
Norway: Knudsen - Hogli (Solli 65), Reginiussen, Hangeland, J A Riise, Gamst Pedersen (Huseklepp 89), Grindheim, Skjelbred, Olsen (B H Riise 80), Holm (Skjonsberg 58), Abdellaoue (Elyounoussi 85). *Sent off: J A Riise 50min.*

Nov 19 - Barinas
Venezuela 0
Angola 0
Att: 15,000. **Ref:** Argote (Ven)
Venezuela: Vega - Velasquez, Alvarado (Perozo 6), G Cichero, Fuenmayor (Yeguez 79), Rincon, Lucena (Parra 86), C Gonzalez (Fernandez 65), Rojas (Guerra 62), Arismendi, Blanco (Rondon 70).
Angola: Lama - Kali, Yamba Asha, Jamba (Loco 62), Marcos Airosa, Djalma (Minguito 62), Andre Macanga, Nelo, Ze Kalanga (Job 51), Mateus (Santana 68), Manucho (Kabungula 90).
Sent off: Marcos Airosa 90min.

Friday, November 21
*Nov 21 - Yangon**
Myanmar 2 (Soe Myat Min 6, 63)
Indonesia 1 (Moe Win og 16)
HT: 1-1
**Final of Grand Royal Challenge Cup*

Wednesday, November 26
Nov 26 - Singapore
Singapore 2 (Wilkinson 39, Casmir 78)
Vietnam 2 (Le Cong Vinh pen 42, Phan Tai Em 90)
HT: 1-1
Singapore 5-4 on pens

Saturday, November 29
Nov 29 - Petaling Jaya
Malaysia 2 (Zainal 22, Hardi 74)
Singapore 2 (Duric 10, 45)
HT: 1-2

CLUB FOOTBALL WORLD

CLUB WORLD CUP

Fixtures

Preliminary round
Dec 11: Adelaide United (Aus) v Waitakere United (NZ) (in Tokyo) (match 1)

Quarter-finals
Dec 13: Al Ahly (Egy) v Pachuca (Mex) (in Tokyo) (match 2)
Dec 14: Winners match 1 v Gamba Osaka (Jap) (in Toyota) (match 3)

Semi-finals
Dec 17: Winners match 2 v LDU Quito (Ecu) (in Tokyo) (match 4)
Dec 18: Winners match 3 v Manchester United (Eng) (in Yokohama) (match 5)

Fifth-place play-off
Dec 18: Losers match 2 v losers match 3 (in Yokohama)

Third-place play-off
Dec 21: Losers match 4 v losers match 5 (in Yokohama)

Final
Dec 21: Winners match 4 v winners match 5 (in Yokohama)

EUROPE

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A
Nov 26
Bordeaux (Fra) 1 (Diarra 81)
Chelsea (Eng) 1 (Anelka 60)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 32,486. **Ref:** De Bleeckere (Blg)
Bordeaux: Valverde - Chaime, Planus, Diawara, Jurietti, Diarra, Fernando, Gouffran (Cavenaghi 67), Gourcuff, Wendel (Obertan 75), Chamakh.
Chelsea: Cech - Bosingwa, Ivanovic, Terry, A Cole, Mikel, J Cole (Paulo Ferreira 85), Lampard, Ballack, Malouda, Anelka (Drogba 63). *Sent off: Lampard 86min.*

Nov 26
CFR Cluj (Rom) 1 (Y Kone 30)
Roma (Ita) 3 (Brighi 11, 64, Totti 23)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 19,292. **Ref:** Cortez Batista (Por)
CFR: Stancioiu - Panin, Cadu, De Sousa, Pereira, Dani (Peralta 73), Muresan, Dubarbier (E Kone 70), Trica (Deac 84), Culio, Y Kone.
Roma: Doni - Cassetti, Juan, Mexes, Tonetto (Riise 86), De Rossi, Taddei, Perrotta (Pizarro 90), Brighi, Totti (Vucinic 81), Julio Baptista.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Roma	5	3	0	2	10	6	9
Chelsea	5	2	2	1	7	4	8
Bordeaux	5	2	1	2	5	9	7
CFR	5	1	1	3	4	7	4

Sep 16	Chelsea-Bordeaux	4-0
Sep 16	Roma-CFR Cluj	1-2
Oct 1	Bordeaux-Roma	1-3
Oct 1	CFR Cluj-Chelsea	0-0
Oct 22	Bordeaux-CFR Cluj	1-0
Oct 22	Chelsea-Roma	1-0
Nov 4	CFR Cluj-Bordeaux	1-2
Nov 4	Roma-Chelsea	3-1
Nov 26	Bordeaux-Chelsea	1-1
Nov 26	CFR Cluj-Roma	1-3
Dec 9	Chelsea-CFR Cluj	
Dec 9	Roma-Bordeaux	

Group B
Nov 26
Anorthosis (Cyp) 2 (Nicolaou 62, Savio 68)
Werder Bremen (Ger) 2 (Diego pen 72, Hugo Almeida 87)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,461. **Ref:** Mejuto Gonzalez (Spa)
Anorthosis: Nagy - A Constantinou, Katsavakis, Dellas, Leiwakabessy, Ocokoljic (Frousos 56), Skopelitis (Nicolaou 46), Dobrasinovic, Laban, Savio (Panagi 71), Hawar.
Werder: Vander - Fritz (Boenisch 76), Mertesacker, Naldo, Tosic, Baumann (Hunt 59), Frings, Ozil, Diego, Pizarro (Rosenberg 79), Hugo Almeida.

Nov 26
Internazionale (Ita) 0
Panathinaikos (Gre) 1 (Sarriegi 68)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 34,955. **Ref:** Ovrebo (Nor)
Inter: Julio Cesar - Maicon, Cordoba, Materazzi, Maxwell (Cruz 75), Zanetti, Cambiasso, Muntari (Ricardo Quaresma 46), Figo (Balotelli 72), Adriano, Ibrahimovic.
Panathinaikos: Galinovic - Nilsson, Vyntra, Goumas, Sarriegi, Spyropoulos, Gabriel (Tziolis 84), Simao, Gilberto Silva, Karagounis (Salpigidis 63), Mantzios (Rukavina 90).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter	5	2	2	1	7	5	8
Panathinaikos	5	2	1	2	7	7	7
Anorthosis	5	1	3	1	8	7	6
Werder	5	0	4	1	5	8	4

Sep 16	Panathinaikos-Internazionale	0-2
Sep 16	Werder-Anorthosis	0-0
Oct 1	Anorthosis-Panathinaikos	3-1
Oct 1	Internazionale-Werder	1-1
Oct 22	Internazionale-Anorthosis	1-0
Oct 22	Panathinaikos-Werder	2-2
Nov 4	Anorthosis-Internazionale	3-3
Nov 4	Werder-Panathinaikos	0-3
Nov 26	Anorthosis-Werder	2-2
Nov 26	Internazionale-Panathinaikos	0-1
Dec 9	Panathinaikos-Anorthosis	
Dec 9	Werder-Internazionale	

Group C
Nov 26
Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) 5 (Jadson 32, 65, 72, Willian 50, Selezniov 75)
Basle (Swi) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,800. **Ref:** Jakobsson (Ice)
Shakhtar: Pyatov - Srna (Yezerskyi 77), Kucher, Ischenko, Rat, Jadson, Hubschman, Gai, Willian, Fernandinho (Duljaj 74), Luiz Adriano (Selezniov 46).
Basle: Costanzo - Zanni, Abraham, Marque, Safari, Huggel, Carlitos (Frei 70), Ergic, Eduardo (Mustafi 65), Stocker, Derdiyok.

Nov 26
Sporting Lisbon (Por) 2 (Miguel Veloso 65, Liedson 66)
Barcelona (Spa) 5 (Henry 14, Pique 17, Messi 49, Caneira og 67, Bojan pen 73)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 31,765. **Ref:** Trefoloni (Ita)
Sporting: Rui Patricio - Caneira, Daniel Carrico, Anderson Polga, Grimi, Miguel Veloso, Bruno Pereirinha, Joao Moutinho, Romagnoli (Derlei 46), Yannick (Tiago 73), Liedson (Helder Postiga 79). *Sent off: Rui Patricio 71min.*
Barcelona: Valdes - Daniel Alves, Pique, Marquez, Caceres, Xavi (Keita 74), Busquets, Gudjohnsen, Hleb, Messi (Pedro 57), Henry (Bojan 46).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	5	4	1	0	16	5	13
Sporting	5	3	0	2	7	8	9
Shakhtar	5	2	0	3	8	5	6
Basle	5	0	1	4	2	15	1

Sep 16	Barcelona-Sporting Lisbon	3-1
Sep 16	Basle-Shakhtar Donetsk	1-2
Oct 1	Shakhtar Donetsk-Barcelona	1-2
Oct 1	Sporting Lisbon-Basle	2-0
Oct 22	Basle-Barcelona	0-5
Oct 22	Shakhtar-Sporting Lisbon	0-1
Nov 4	Barcelona-Basle	1-1
Nov 4	Sporting Lisbon-Shakhtar	1-0
Nov 26	Shakhtar Donetsk-Basle	5-0
Nov 26	Sporting Lisbon-Barcelona	2-5
Dec 9	Barcelona-Shakhtar Donetsk	
Dec 9	Basle-Sporting Lisbon	

Group D

Nov 26

Atletico Madrid (Spa) 2 (Simao 14, Rodriguez 28)
PSV Eindhoven (Hol) 1 (Koevermans 47)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Match played behind closed doors
Atletico: Coupet - Seitaridis, Ujfalusi, Heitinga (Pablo 51), Pernia, Raul Garcia (Paulo Assuncao 80), Maniche, Rodriguez, Simao, Forlan, Aguero (Sinama-Pongolle 66).
PSV: Isaksson - Salcido, Brechet, Rodriguez, Pieters (Culina 46), Dzsudzsak, Simons, Mendez (Nijland 86), Afellay (Bakkal 30), Lazovic, Koevermans.

Nov 26

Liverpool (Eng) 1 (Gerrard 23)
Marseille (Fra) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 40,024, **Ref:** Benquerenca (Por)
Liverpool: Reina - Arbeloa, Carragher, Agger, Fabio Aurelio (Dossena 46), Mascherano, Xabi Alonso, Kuijt (Lucas 85), Gerrard, Riera (Benayoun 64), Fernando Torres.
Marseille: Mandanda - Bonnart (Samassa 89), Zubar, Hilton, Taiwo, Ziani, Cana, Cheyrou, Ben Arfa, Niang, Kone (Valbuena 78).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletico	5	3	2	0	9	4	11
Liverpool	5	3	2	0	8	4	11
Marseille	5	1	0	4	5	7	3
PSV	5	1	0	4	4	11	3

Sep 16	Marseille-Liverpool	1-2
Sep 16	PSV-Atletico Madrid	0-3
Oct 1	Atletico Madrid-Marseille	2-1
Oct 1	Liverpool-PSV	3-1
Oct 22	Atletico Madrid-Liverpool	1-1
Oct 22	PSV-Marseille	2-0
Nov 4	Liverpool-Atletico Madrid	1-1
Nov 4	Marseille-PSV	3-0
Nov 26	Atletico Madrid-PSV	2-1
Nov 26	Liverpool-Marseille	1-0
Dec 9	Marseille-Atletico Madrid	
Dec 9	PSV-Liverpool	

Group E

Nov 25

AaB Aalborg (Den) 2 (Caca 73, Caldwell og 87)
Celtic (Sco) 1 (Robson 53)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,096. **Ref:** Plautz (Aut)
AaB: Zaza - Bogelund, Olfers, Jakobsen, Pedersen (Kristensen 81), Augustinussen, Risgard, Caca, Johansson, Enevoldsen (Due 70), Curth (Saganowski 70).
Celtic: Boruc - Hinkel, Caldwell, McManus, Wilson (Maloney 90), Nakamura, S Brown, Robson, Loovens, Samaras (Sheridan 69), McDonald.

Nov 25

Villarreal (Spa) 0
Manchester United (Eng) 0
Att: 22,529. **Ref:** Rosetti (Ita)
Villarreal: Diego Lopez - Javi Venta, Rodriguez, Fuentes, Capdevila, Cazorla, Senna (Bruno 46), Eguren, Pires (Fernandez 65), Rossi (Franco 79), Ibagaza. *Sent off: Capdevila 82min.*
Man Utd: Kuszczak - O'Shea, Ferdinand, Evans, Evra, Fletcher (Gibson 80), Carrick (Tevez 86), Cristiano Ronaldo, Nani (Park 85), Anderson, Rooney.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	5	2	3	0	7	1	9
Villarreal	5	2	3	0	9	5	9
AaB	5	1	2	2	7	12	5
Celtic	5	0	2	3	2	7	2

Sep 17	Celtic-AaB	0-0
Sep 17	Manchester United-Villarreal	0-0
Sep 30	AaB-Manchester United	0-3
Sep 30	Villarreal-Celtic	1-0
Oct 21	Manchester United-Celtic	3-0
Oct 21	Villarreal-AaB	6-3
Nov 5	AaB-Villarreal	2-2
Nov 5	Celtic-Manchester United	1-1
Nov 25	AaB-Celtic	2-1
Nov 25	Villarreal-Manchester United	0-0
Dec 10	Celtic-Villarreal	
Dec 10	Manchester United-AaB	

Group F

Nov 25

Bayern Munich (Ger) 3 (Klose 57, 71, Toni 61)
Steaua Bucharest (Rom) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 64,000. **Ref:** Braamhaar (Hol)
Bayern: Rensing - Oddo, Lucio (Breno 78), Van Buyten, Lahm, Van Bommel, Ze Roberto, Schweinsteiger, Ribery, Toni (Borowski 83), Klose.
Steaua: Zapata - Golanski, Goian, Ghionea, Marin, Radoi, Petre (Lovin 66), Nicolita, Moreno, Szekely (Semedo 63), Stancu (Tiago Gomes 78).

Nov 25

Fiorentina (Ita) 1 (Gilardino 45)
Lyon (Fra) 2 (Makoun 15, Benzema 27)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 23,736. **Ref:** Kassai (Hun)
Fiorentina: Frey - Zauri, Dainelli (Kroldrup 46), Gamberini, Vargas, Kuzmanovic, Felipe Melo (Osvaldo 79), Montolivo, Santana (Jovetic 55), Gilardino, Mutu.
Lyon: Lloris - Mensah, Cris, Boumsong, Grosso, Toulalan, Makoun, Juninho, Govou, Benzema (Piquionne 90), Keita (Ederson 80).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lyon	5	3	2	0	12	7	11
Bayern	5	3	2	0	9	2	11
Fiorentina	5	0	3	2	4	8	3
Steaua	5	0	1	4	3	11	1

Sep 17	Lyon-Fiorentina	2-2
Sep 17	Steaua-Bayern Munich	0-1
Sep 30	Bayern Munich-Lyon	1-1
Sep 30	Fiorentina-Steaua	0-0
Oct 21	Bayern Munich-Fiorentina	3-0
Oct 21	Steaua-Lyon	3-5
Nov 5	Fiorentina-Bayern Munich	1-1
Nov 5	Lyon-Steaua	2-0
Nov 25	Bayern Munich-Steaua	3-0
Nov 25	Fiorentina-Lyon	1-2
Dec 10	Lyon-Bayern Munich	
Dec 10	Steaua-Fiorentina	

Group G

Nov 25

Arsenal (Eng) 1 (Bendtner 87)
Dynamo Kyiv (Ukr) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 59,374. **Ref:** Hamer (Lux)
Arsenal: Almunia - Djourou, Gallas, Silvestre, Clichy, Ramsey (Bendtner 69), Fabregas, Song, Denilson, Van Persie, Vela (Wilshere 77).
Dynamo: Bogush - Betao, Diakhate, Asatiani, El Kaddouri, Vukojevic, Ghioane, Eremenko, Aliyev, Bangoura, Milevskyi. *Sent off: Aliyev 89min.*

Nov 25

Fenerbahce (Tur) 1 (Kazim 63)
Porto (Por) 2 (Lopez 19, 28)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 38,120. **Ref:** Undiano Mallenco (Spa)
Fenerbahce: Volkan Demirel - Gokhan, Yasin, Edu Dracena, Roberto Carlos, Josico, Emre (Kazim 46), Deivid (Burak 77), Alex, Ugur, Guiza.
Porto: Helton - Fucile, Rolando, Bruno Alves, Pedro Emanuel, Tomas Costa (Guarin 61), Fernando, Raul Meireles, Lopez, Hulk (Pele 79), Rodriguez (M Gonzalez 74).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	5	3	2	0	11	3	11
Porto	5	3	0	2	7	8	9
Dynamo	5	1	2	2	3	4	5
Fenerbahce	5	0	2	3	4	10	2

Sep 17	Dynamo Kyiv-Arsenal	1-1
Sep 17	Porto-Fenerbahce	3-1
Sep 30	Arsenal-Porto	4-0
Sep 30	Fenerbahce-Dynamo Kyiv	0-0
Oct 21	Fenerbahce-Arsenal	2-5
Oct 21	Porto-Dynamo Kyiv	0-1
Nov 5	Arsenal-Fenerbahce	0-0
Nov 5	Dynamo Kyiv-Porto	1-2
Nov 25	Arsenal-Dynamo Kyiv	1-0
Nov 25	Fenerbahce-Porto	1-2
Dec 10	Dynamo Kyiv-Fenerbahce	
Dec 10	Porto-Arsenal	

Group H

Nov 25

BATE Borisov (Bls) 0
Real Madrid (Spa) 1 (Raul 7)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,500. **Ref:** Hauge (Nor)
BATE: Veremko - Khagush, Kazantsev, Sosnovsky, Yurevich, Volodko (Sivakov 65), Likhtarovich (Skavysh 70), Kryvets, Bliznyuk, Stasevich (Nekhaychik 46), Rodionov.
Real Madrid: Casillas - Torres, Sergio Ramos, Pepe, Heinze, Sneijder, Gago, Guti (Van der Vaart 79), Raul (Javi Garcia 86), Saviola (Bueno 89), Drenthe.

Nov 25

Zenit St Petersburg (Rus) 0
Juventus (Ita) 0
Att: 20,155. **Ref:** Larsen (Den)
Zenit: Malafeev - Anyukov, Lombaerts, Krizanac, Sirl, Tymoshchuk, Denisov, Zyryanov, Danny, Arshavin (Fayzulin 70), Pogrebnyak.
Juventus: Manninger - Grygera, Mellberg, Chiellini, Molinaro, Camoranesi (Marchionni 84), Sissoko, Marchisio, Nedved, Del Piero (Giovinco 78), Iaquinta (Amauri 88).

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE – GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	5	3	2	0	7	3	11
Real Madrid	5	3	0	2	6	5	9
Zenit	5	1	2	2	4	4	5
BATE	5	0	2	3	3	8	2

Sep 17	Juventus-Zenit	1-0
Sep 17	Real Madrid-BATE Borisov	2-0
Sep 30	BATE Borisov-Juventus	2-2
Sep 30	Zenit-Real Madrid	1-2
Oct 21	Juventus-Real Madrid	2-1
Oct 21	Zenit-BATE Borisov	1-1
Nov 5	BATE Borisov-Zenit	0-2
Nov 5	Real Madrid-Juventus	0-2
Nov 25	BATE Borisov-Real Madrid	0-1
Nov 25	Zenit-Juventus	0-0
Dec 10	Juventus-BATE Borisov	
Dec 10	Real Madrid-Zenit	

Top two in each group qualify for 1st knockout round; third-placed teams enter UEFA Cup 1st knockout round

UEFA CUP

Group A

Nov 6: Manchester City (Eng) 3 Twente Enschede (Hol) 2; Racing Santander (Spa) 1 Schalke (Ger) 1.
Nov 27: Paris Saint-Germain (Fra) 2 Racing Santander 2; Schalke 0 Manchester City 2.
Dec 3: Manchester City 0 Paris Saint-Germain 0; Twente Enschede 2 Schalke 1.

UEFA CUP – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man City	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
Twente	3	2	0	1	5	4	6
Schalke	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
R Santander	3	0	2	1	3	4	2
PSG	3	0	2	1	3	5	2

Remaining fixtures
Dec 18: Paris Saint-Germain v Twente Enschede; Racing Santander v Manchester City.

Group B

Nov 6: Benfica (Por) 0 Galatasaray (Tur) 2; Metalist (Ukr) 0 Hertha Berlin (Ger) 0.
Nov 27: Galatasaray 0 Metalist 1; Olympiakos (Gre) 5 Benfica 1.
Dec 3: Hertha Berlin 0 Galatasaray 1; Metalist 1 Olympiakos 0.

UEFA CUP – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	4	3	0	1	4	1	9
Metalist	3	2	1	0	2	0	7
Olympiakos	3	1	0	2	5	3	3
Hertha Berlin	3	0	2	1	1	2	2
Benfica	3	0	1	2	2	8	1

Remaining fixtures
Dec 18: Benfica v Metalist; Olympiakos v Hertha Berlin.

Group C

Nov 6: Standard Liege (Blg) 1 Sevilla (Spa) 0; Stuttgart (Ger) 2 Partizan Belgrade (Ser) 0.
Nov 27: Partizan Belgrade 0 Standard Liege 1; Sampdoria (Ita) 1 Stuttgart 1.
Dec 3: Sevilla 3 Partizan Belgrade 0; Standard Liege 3 Sampdoria 0.

UEFA CUP – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Standard	3	3	0	0	5	0	9
Sevilla	3	2	0	1	5	1	6
Stuttgart	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Sampdoria	3	1	1	1	3	5	4
Partizan	4	0	0	4	1	8	0

Remaining fixtures
Dec 18: Sampdoria v Sevilla; Stuttgart v Standard Liege.

Group D

Nov 6: Spartak Moscow (Rus) 1 Udinese (Ita) 2; Tottenham (Eng) 4 Dinamo Zagreb (Cro) 0.
Nov 27: Dinamo Zagreb 0 Spartak Moscow 1; NEC Nijmegen (Hol) 0 Tottenham 1.
Dec 3: Spartak Moscow 1 NEC Nijmegen 2; Udinese 2 Dinamo Zagreb 1.

UEFA CUP – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Udinese	3	3	0	0	6	2	9
Tottenham	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
NEC	3	1	0	2	4	5	3
Spartak	3	1	0	2	3	4	3
Dinamo	4	1	0	3	4	9	3

Remaining fixtures
Dec 18: NEC Nijmegen v Udinese; Tottenham v Spartak Moscow.

Group E

Nov 6: Milan (Ita) 1 Sporting Braga (Por) 0; Wolfsburg (Ger) 5 Heerenveen (Hol) 1.
Nov 27: Portsmouth (Eng) 2 Milan 2; Sporting Braga 2 Wolfsburg 3.
Dec 4: Heerenveen 1 Sporting Braga 2; Wolfsburg 3 Portsmouth 2.

UEFA CUP – GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wolfsburg	3	3	0	0	11	5	9
Milan	3	2	1	0	6	3	7
Braga	4	2	0	2	7	5	6
Portsmouth	3	0	1	2	4	8	1
Heerenveen	3	0	0	3	3	10	0

Remaining fixtures
Dec 17: Milan v Wolfsburg; Portsmouth v Heerenveen.

Group F

Nov 6: Ajax (Hol) 1 Zilina (Slk) 0; Slavia Prague (Cze) 0 Aston Villa (Eng) 1.
Nov 27: Hamburg (Ger) 0 Ajax 1; Zilina 0 Slavia Prague 0.
Dec 4: Aston Villa 1 Zilina 2; Slavia Prague 0 Hamburg 2.

UEFA CUP – GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hamburg	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Aston Villa	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
Ajax	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
Zilina	4	1	1	2	3	4	4
Slavia	3	0	1	2	0	3	1

Remaining fixtures
Dec 17: Ajax v Slavia Prague; Hamburg v Aston Villa.

Group G

Nov 6: Saint-Etienne (Fra) 3 Rosenborg (Nor) 0; Valencia (Spa) 1 FC Copenhagen (Den) 1.
Nov 27: Club Brugge (Blg) 1 Saint-Etienne 1; Rosenborg 0 Valencia 4.
Dec 4: FC Copenhagen 1 Rosenborg 1; Valencia 1 Club Brugge 1.

UEFA CUP – GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saint-Etienne	3	2	1	0	7	2	7
Valencia	3	1	2	0	6	2	5
Club Brugge	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
Copenhagen	3	0	2	1	3	5	2
Rosenborg	4	0	2	2	1	8	2

Remaining fixtures
Dec 17: Club Brugge v FC Copenhagen; Saint-Etienne v Valencia.

Group H

Nov 6: Feyenoord (Hol) 1 CSKA Moscow (Rus) 3; Lech Poznan (Pol) 2 Nancy (Fra) 2.
Nov 27: CSKA Moscow 2 Lech Poznan 1; Deportivo La Coruna (Spa) 3 Feyenoord 0.
Dec 4: Lech Poznan 1 Deportivo La Coruna 1; Nancy 3 CSKA Moscow 4.

UEFA CUP – GROUP H	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CSKA	4	4	0	0	12	5	12
Nancy	3	1	1	1	8	6	4
Deportivo	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Lech	3	0	2	1	4	5	2
Feyenoord	3	0	0	3	1	9	0

Remaining fixtures
Dec 17: Deportivo La Coruna v Nancy; Feyenoord v Lech Poznan.

Top three in each group qualify for 1st knockout round, in which they will be joined by the third-placed sides from the eight Champions League groups

ARMENIA

ARMENIA – FINAL*	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ararat*	28	18	5	5	48	23	59
Pyunik*	28	18	5	5	40	18	59
Gandzasar	28	13	8	7	39	27	47
Mika	28	13	7	8	38	28	46
Banants	28	11	8	9	34	25	41
Ulysses	28	7	8	13	19	29	29
Shirak	28	5	4	19	15	40	19
Kilikia	28	2	5	21	21	64	11

**Ararat and Pyunik went into championship play-off because they finished level on points*

Championship play-off

Nov 19
Pyunik 2 (Tadevosyan 66, 109)
Ararat 1 (Minasyan 68)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 1-1

No relegation because no sides were eligible for promotion

AUSTRIA

Nov 7: Salzburg 5 Austria Wien 1.
Nov 8: Rapid 5 Altach 1; Sturm 2 Kapfenberg 0; Mattersburg 0 Austria Karnten 0.
Nov 9: Ried 3 LASK 0.
Nov 11: Austria Wien 2 Rapid 0.
Nov 12: Kapfenberg 2 Mattersburg 1; Ried 2 Salzburg 2; Austria Karnten 2 Altach 1; LASK 0 Sturm 3.
Nov 15: Sturm 3 Ried 0; Altach 3 Kapfenberg 0; Mattersburg 0 Austria Wien 0; Rapid 5 LASK 0.
Nov 16: Salzburg 4 Austria Karnten 1.
Nov 22: LASK 0 Austria Karnten 2; Salzburg 2 Kapfenberg 5; Austria Wien 3 Ried 1; Altach 4 Mattersburg 1.
Nov 23: Sturm 2 Rapid 2.
Nov 29: Rapid 8 Altach 1; Ried 1 LASK 0; Kapfenberg 1 Austria Wien 2.
Nov 30: Mattersburg 2 Salzburg 4.

AUSTRIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Salzburg	20	13	4	3	55	29	43
Rapid	20	12	4	4	52	23	40
Sturm	19	12	3	4	46	22	39
Austria Wien	20	11	5	4	31	24	38
A Karnten	19	8	5	6	27	20	29
Ried	20	8	5	7	27	24	29
LASK	20	7	0	13	20	40	21
Kapfenberg	20	4	3	13	23	45	15
Mattersburg	20	3	4	13	22	44	13
Altach	20	4	1	15	26	58	13

BELARUS

BELARUS – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
BATE	30	19	10	1	54	20	67
Dynamo M	30	19	5	6	49	29	62
MTZ-RIPO	30	17	6	7	65	37	57
Shakhtyor	30	15	6	9	50	35	51
Vitebsk	30	14	9	7	39	26	51
Dynamo B	30	13	8	9	40	34	47
Naftan	30	13	7	10	41	35	46
Smarhon	30	10	9	11	26	39	39
Dnyapro	30	9	11	10	45	42	38
Hranit	30	8	12	10	35	34	36
Homel	30	9	6	15	35	47	33
Nyoman	30	8	9	13	36	40	33
Torpedo	30	7	10	13	25	36	31
Lokomotiv	30	6	7	17	28	50	25
Savit	30	5	6	19	28	61	21
Daryda	30	4	7	19	25	56	19

Relegated: Daryda
Promoted: FC Minsk

BELGIUM

Friday, November 7
Cercle Brugge 2 (De Smet 49, Nyoni 90)
Zulte Waregem 0 Att: 8,158

Saturday, November 8
Anderlecht 2 (Legear 66, Frutos 73)
Lokeren 3 (Maazou 24, 32, Dupre 53) Att: 23,074

Gent 1 (Thijs 31)
Dender 1 (Sylla 59) Att: 10,720

Kortrijk 0
Mechelen 0 Att: 5,218

Mons 0
Mouscron 0 Att: 3,000

Roeselare 1 (Oliseh 27)
Tubize 2 (Perbet 15, Neels 65) Att: 6,000

Westerlo 1 (Alfonso Ruiz 70)
Genk 0 Att: 7,500

Sunday, November 9
Charleroi 2 (Smolders 52, Alcaraz og 90)
Club Brugge 2 (Sonck 70, pen 73) Att: 14,101

Germinal Beerschot 1 (Haroun 16)
Standard 3 (Mbokani 39, 84, Jovanovic 61) Att: 12,000

Friday, November 14
Westerlo 3 (Tomou 32, Wils 40, Alfonso Ruiz 87)
Gent 2 (Rosales 8, Thijs 72) Att: 6,500

Saturday, November 15
Dender 1 (De Pever 71)
Kortrijk 0 Att: 4,135

Genk 1 (Dugary 71)
Roeselare 1 (Oliseh 66) Att: 21,685

Mechelen 0
Mons 0 Att: 10,300

Mouscron 2 (Walasiak 24, Okwunwanne 28)
Charleroi 1 (Camus 56) Att: 5,246

Tubize 3 (Villano 5, Dufer 55, Perbet 90)
Cercle Brugge 0 Att: 2,800

Zulte Waregem 2 (Matthijs 75, Peeters og 88)
Germinal Beerschot 2 (Vandenbergh 29, 30) Att: 6,023

Sunday, November 16
Club Brugge 1 (Sonck 4)
Anderlecht 1 (Boussoufa 49) Att: 28,128

Lokeren 1 (Maazou 73)
Standard 1 (Mbokani 75) Att: 7,162

Saturday, November 22
Anderlecht 2 (Boussoufa 13, Biglia 89)
Westerlo 0 Att: 23,347

Cercle Brugge 2 (Buffel 9, Iachtchouk 59)
Mechelen 1 (Mununga 19) Att: 8,427

Charleroi 3 (Habibou 49, 52, 57)
Tubize 2 (Dufer 22, Villano 42) Att: 8,700

Germinal Beerschot 0
Lokeren 2 (Pavlovic 71, Maazou 75) Att: 9,000

Mons 1 (Collet 22)
Club Brugge 2 (Clement 65, Sonck 86) Att: 8,000

Roeselare 2 (Mulisa 2, Betremieux 88)
Dender 2 (Destorme 13, Sylla 55) Att: 6,000

Standard 3 (De Camargo 24, 57, Jovanovic 73)
Mouscron 1 (Oussalah 61) Att: 25,000

Sunday, November 23
Gent 2 (Foley 57, Olufade pen 73)
Genk 3 (Toth 40, Ogunjimi 47, Joao Carlos 56) Att: 10,530

Friday, November 28
Dender 0
Anderlecht 2 (Gillet 4, Frutos 50)

Saturday, November 29
Genk 3 (Joao Carlos 19, Dugary 44, Toth 55)
Cercle Brugge 2 (Iachtchouk 38, De Sutter 64)
Gent 4 (Olufade 25, 68, Nfor 40, Ruiz 90)
Roeselare 0

Mouscron 2 (Custovic 9, Lepoint 80)
Lokeren 0

Tubize 3 (Perbet 16, 60, 65)
Kortrijk 3 (Coulibaly 27, 72, Verbrugghe 64)

Westerlo 2 (Alfonso Ruiz 67, Farssi 42)
Mons 1 (Diane 70)

Zulte Waregem 4 (Matthys 14, 41, Leye 29, 68)
Charleroi 2 (Smolders 19, Thereau 76)

Sunday, November 30
Club Brugge 3 (Vargas 21, Sonck 48, 72)
Germinal Beerschot 0

Mechelen 0
Standard 0

BELGIUM	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Club Brugge	14	9	4	1	27	12	31
Anderlecht	14	9	2	3	33	16	29
Standard	14	8	4	2	23	13	28
Genk	14	8	3	3	24	17	27
Westerlo	14	8	3	3	21	17	27
Mouscron	14	7	3	4	22	16	24
Gent	14	6	4	4	30	18	22
Lokeren	14	5	7	2	17	11	22
Cercle Brugge	14	6	1	7	20	23	19
Charleroi	14	5	3	6	19	23	18
Z Waregem	13	5	2	6	19	18	17
Dender	14	3	5	6	18	25	14
Kortrijk	13	3	5	5	13	22	14
Tubize	14	3	2	9	17	28	11
Mons	14	2	5	7	11	18	11
Mechelen	14	2	5	7	13	24	11
Germinal B	14	1	6	7	12	21	9
Roeselare	14	1	4	9	9	26	7

LEADING GOALSCORERS
10 Moussa Maazou (Lokeren)
9 Dieumerci Mbokani (Standard)
9 Jeremy Perbet (Tubize)
9 Wesley Sonck (Club Brugge)
8 Adekanmi Olufade (Gent)
7 Jaime Alfonso Ruiz (Westerlo)

BULGARIA

Nov 7: Pirin 2 Vihren 1.
Nov 8: Sliven 0 Lokomotiv Sofia 0; Belasitsa 1 Lovech 1; Minyor 1 Botev 0; CSKA 1 Cherno More 1; Lokomotiv Plovdiv 0 Lokomotiv Mezdra 2.
Nov 9: Spartak Varna 0 Levski 1.
Nov 10: Slavia 2 Chernomorets 0.
Nov 14: Cherno More 5 Spartak Varna 0.
Nov 15: Vihren 1 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 2; Lokomotiv Mezdra 3 Belasitsa 1; Lokomotiv Sofia 1 CSKA 1; Botev 1 Pirin 0; Lovech 2 Sliven 0.
Nov 16: Levski 1 Slavia 0.
Nov 17: Chernomorets 1 Minyor 1.
Nov 21: Spartak Varna 0 Lokomotiv Sofia 0.
Nov 22: Sliven 2 Lokomotiv Mezdra 0; Lokomotiv Plovdiv 1 Belasitsa 1; Vihren 0 Botev 0.
Nov 23: Minyor 0 Levski 2; Pirin 2 Chernomorets 1; CSKA 2 Lovech 0.
Nov 24: Slavia 0 Cherno More 2.
Nov 28: Lokomotiv Mezdra 2 CSKA 2.
Nov 29: Botev 2 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 2; Cherno More 4 Minyor 0; Belasitsa 2 Sliven 1; Chernomorets 1 Vihren 3; Levski 2 Pirin 0.
Nov 30: Lovech 2 Spartak Varna 1.
Dec 1: Lokomotiv Sofia 0 Slavia 1.

BULGARIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Levski	15	10	3	2	26	7	33
CSKA	15	9	5	1	26	12	32
Lovech	15	8	4	3	22	13	28
Cherno More	15	8	2	5	24	12	26
Sliven	15	6	6	3	20	15	24
Lok Sofia	15	6	4	5	13	13	22
Lok Mezdra	15	6	3	6	20	16	21
Slavia	15	6	2	7	18	17	20
Chernomorets	15	4	7	4	18	19	19
Pirin	15	5	3	7	15	21	18
Minyor	15	4	5	6	11	18	17
Vihren	15	5	1	9	11	18	16
Lok Plovdiv	15	3	6	6	17	24	15
Botev	15	3	6	6	14	21	15
Spartak Varna	15	2	5	8	10	23	11
Belasitsa	15	2	4	9	9	25	10

CROATIA

Nov 9: Dinamo 6 Sesvete 1; Slaven 2 Varteks 3; Rijeka 0 Inter 1; Osijek 3 Zadar 0; Sibenik 4 Cibalia 0; Hajduk 4 Zagreb 0.
Nov 16: Zadar 1 Sibenik 0; Varteks 0 Osijek 0; Zagreb 2 Slaven 0; Cibalia 1 Dinamo 1; Hajduk 2 Rijeka 0; Sesvete 1 Inter 3.
Nov 19: Rijeka 1 Dinamo 0.
Nov 23: Osijek 0 Zagreb 2; Rijeka 2 Sesvete 1; Sibenik 2 Varteks 0; Dinamo 2 Zadar 0; Inter 1 Cibalia 2; Slaven 1 Hajduk 2.
Nov 30: Zagreb 0 Sibenik 4; Cibalia 3 Sesvete 1; Hajduk 3 Osijek 1; Zadar 1 Inter 1; Slaven 2 Rijeka 1; Varteks 0 Dinamo 1.

CROATIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo	17	11	3	3	35	16	36
Hajduk	17	11	2	4	29	16	35
Sibenik	17	8	4	5	26	14	28
Slaven	17	8	3	6	25	22	27
Zagreb	17	6	6	5	18	22	24
Osijek	17	6	4	7	25	24	22
Rijeka	17	6	4	7	20	20	22
Varteks	17	6	3	8	22	25	21
Cibalia	17	6	3	8	17	30	21
Inter	17	4	6	7	27	30	18
Sesvete	17	4	4	9	19	31	16
Zadar	17	3	4	10	12	25	13

CZECH REPUBLIC

Nov 8: Sparta 2 Zlin 0.
Nov 9: Zizkov 0 Liberec 0; Brno 1 Plzen 2; Jablonec 2 Bohemians 1; Kladno 1 Teplice 1; Olomouc 4 Pribram 1; Ceske Budejovice 2 Slavia 2.
Nov 10: Mlada Boleslav 0 Ostrava 2.
Nov 15: Ostrava 0 Ceske Budejovice 0; Liberec 2 Kladno 0; Plzen 2 Mlada Boleslav 0; Zlin 1 Olomouc 1.
Nov 16: Pribram 2 Jablonec 0; Bohemians 4 Sparta 3; Slavia 2 Zizkov 1.
Nov 17: Teplice 1 Brno 0.
Nov 23: Zizkov 2 Pribram 0; Ceske Budejovice 2 Liberec 0; Kladno 1 Plzen 0; Brno 3 Zlin 0; Mlada Boleslav 1 Bohemians 0; Olomouc 2 Ostrava 1; Slavia 3 Teplice 1.
Nov 24: Jablonec 1 Sparta 0.
Nov 29: Liberec 0 Brno 0; Zlin 0 Mlada Boleslav 2; Sparta 5 Kladno 0; Plzen 4 Olomouc 0.
Nov 30: Teplice 2 Zizkov 0; Bohemians 2 Ceske Budejovice 0; Pribram 0 Slavia 0.
Dec 1: Ostrava 3 Jablonec 1.

CZECH REPUBLIC	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slavia	16	11	4	1	37	11	37
M Boleslav	16	9	4	3	23	16	31
Ostrava	16	9	3	4	30	16	30
Sparta	16	8	3	5	27	17	27
Liberec	16	7	5	4	21	17	26
Olomouc	16	7	5	4	21	21	26
Plzen	16	5	7	4	23	19	22
Teplice	16	6	4	6	17	14	22
Jablonec	16	6	4	6	16	20	22
Brno	16	5	5	6	17	16	20
Bohemians	16	6	1	9	23	29	19
Pribram	16	5	3	8	17	21	18
C Budejovice	16	3	9	4	14	22	18
Kladno	16	3	4	9	9	27	13
Zizkov	16	3	2	11	16	26	11
Zlin	16	2	3	11	8	27	9

DENMARK

Nov 8: Esbjerg 1 OB 2.
Nov 9: Horsens 1 AGF 1; Randers 3 Nordsjaelland 2; Copenhagen 4 SonderjyskE 0; AaB 0 Brondby 0.
Nov 10: Midtjylland 2 Vejle 0.
Nov 15: AGF 0 SonderjyskE 0; Brondby 2 Nordsjaelland 1.
Nov 16: OB 2 Vejle 0; Horsens 2 Randers 2; AaB 2 Esbjerg 1; Midtjylland 0 Copenhagen 3.
Nov 22: SonderjyskE 0 Brondby 6; Vejle 0 AaB 3.
Nov 23: Esbjerg 1 Horsens 0; Nordsjaelland 1 OB 4; Copenhagen 2 AGF 1.
Nov 24: Randers 1 Midtjylland 2.
Nov 29: Brondby 2 Vejle 0.
Nov 30: Midtjylland 3 Nordsjaelland 0; Horsens 0 SonderjyskE 3; Esbjerg 2 Randers 2; AaB 3 Copenhagen 1.
Dec 1: AGF 2 OB 1.

DENMARK	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brondby	16	11	3	2	29	13	36
OB	16	11	2	3	32	17	35
Copenhagen	16	10	4	2	27	10	34
Midtjylland	16	9	3	4	25	18	30
AGF	16	7	2	7	20	22	23
Randers	16	4	9	3	26	20	21
AaB	16	5	5	6	21	24	20
Nordsjaelland	16	4	3	9	19	27	15
SonderjyskE	16	3	5	8	13	28	14
Esbjerg	16	2	6	8	14	22	12
Horsens	16	2	5	9	15	25	11
Vejle	16	2	5	9	11	26	11

ENGLAND

Saturday, November 8

Arsenal 2 (Nasri 22, 48)
Manchester United 1 (Rafael 90) Att: 60,106

Hull 0
Bolton 1 (Taylor 50) Att: 24,903

Liverpool 3 (Keane 34, 43, Arbeloa 90)
West Bromwich 0 Att: 43,451

Sunderland 1 (Cisse 4)
Portsmouth 2 (Belhadj 51, Defoe pen 90) Att: 37,712

West Ham 1 (Collison 63)
Everton 3 (Lescott 83, Saha 85, 87) Att: 33,961

Wigan 0
Stoke 0 Att: 15,881

Sunday, November 9

Aston Villa 1 (Sidwell 37)
Middlesbrough 2 (Tuncay 34, 88) Att: 36,672

Blackburn 0
Chelsea 2 (Anelka 40, 68) Att: 20,670

Fulham 2 (Johnson 23, Murphy pen 65)
Newcastle 1 (Ameobi 57) Att: 24,740

Manchester City 1 (Robinho 16)
Tottenham 2 (Bent 29, 64) Att: 41,583

Saturday, November 15

Arsenal 0
Aston Villa 2 (Clichy og 70, Agbonlahor 80) Att: 60,047

Blackburn 1 (Samba 45)
Sunderland 2 (Jones 49, Cisse 72) Att: 21,798

Bolton 0
Liverpool 2 (Kuijt 28, Gerrard 73) Att: 24,893

Fulham 2 (Davies 33, Johnson 70)
Tottenham 1 (Campbell 81) Att: 25,139

Manchester United 5 (Cristiano Ronaldo 4, 89, Carrick 45, Berbatov 49, Welbeck 84)
Stoke 0 Att: 75,369

Newcastle 2 (Owen 80, Martins 87)
Wigan 2 (Taylor 3, Bramble 89) Att: 47,657

West Bromwich 0
Chelsea 3 (Bosingwa 34, Anelka 38, 45) Att: 26,322

West Ham 0
Portsmouth 0 Att: 32,328

Sunday, November 16

Everton 1 (Alyegbeni 65)
Middlesbrough 1 (O'Neil 8) Att: 31,063

Hull 2 (Cousin 14, Geovanni 61)
Manchester City 2 (Ireland 37, 45) Att: 24,902

Saturday, November 22

Aston Villa 0
Manchester United 0 Att: 42,585

Chelsea 0
Newcastle 0 Att: 41,660

Liverpool 0
Fulham 0 Att: 43,589

Manchester City 3 (Ireland 45, Robinho 56, Sturridge pen 90)
Arsenal 0 Att: 44,878

Middlesbrough 1 (Pogatetz 77)
Bolton 3 (Steinsson 8, Taylor 10, Elmander 78) Att: 24,487

Portsmouth 2 (Crouch 20, Johnson 63)
Hull 2 (Turner 54, Pamarot og 89) Att: 20,240

Stoke 1 (Sidibe 84)
West Bromwich 0 Att: 26,613

Sunday, November 23

Sunderland 0
West Ham 1 (Behrami 20) Att: 35,222

Tottenham 1 (Pavlyuchenko 9)
Blackburn 0 Att: 35,903

Monday, November 24

Wigan 1 (Camara 51)
Everton 0 Att: 18,344

Saturday, November 29

Aston Villa 0
Fulham 0 Att: 36,625

Middlesbrough 0
Newcastle 0 Att: 32,160

Stoke 1 (Fuller pen 73)
Hull 1 (King 45) Att: 27,500

Sunderland 1 (Cisse 11)
Bolton 4 (Taylor 18, Cahill 21, Elmander 39, 55) Att: 35,457

Wigan 2 (Camara 61, Boyce 87)
West Bromwich 1 (Miller 47) Att: 17,054

Sunday, November 30

Chelsea 1 (Djourou og 31)
Arsenal 2 (Van Persie 59, 62) Att: 41,760

Manchester City 0
Manchester United 1 (Rooney 42) Att: 47,320

Portsmouth 3 (Crouch 49, Defoe 53, Davis 79)
Blackburn 2 (Derbyshire 62, Tugay 67) Att: 18,111

Tottenham 0
Everton 1 (Pienaar 51) Att: 35,742

Monday, December 1

Liverpool 0
West Ham 0 Att: 41,169

ENGLAND	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	15	10	4	1	21	8	34
Chelsea	15	10	3	2	33	6	33
Man Utd	14	8	4	2	26	10	28
Arsenal	15	8	2	5	27	19	26
Aston Villa	15	7	4	4	22	16	25
Hull	15	6	5	4	22	24	23
Everton	15	6	4	5	20	22	22
Portsmouth	15	6	4	5	18	22	22
Bolton	15	6	2	7	18	17	20
Fulham	14	5	4	5	12	11	19
Wigan	15	5	4	6	18	19	19
Middlesbrough	15	5	4	6	15	21	19
West Ham	15	5	3	7	17	22	18
Stoke	15	5	3	7	15	25	18
Man City	15	5	2	8	29	23	17
Tottenham	15	4	3	8	17	21	15
Newcastle	15	3	6	6	17	22	15
Sunderland	15	4	3	8	13	24	15
Blackburn	15	3	4	8	16	28	13
West Brom	15	3	2	10	11	27	11

LEADING GOALSCORERS

12 Nicolas Anelka (Chelsea)
8 Cristiano Ronaldo (Manchester United)
8 Robinho (Manchester City)
8 Amr Zaki (Wigan)

ESTONIA

ESTONIA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Levadia	36	29	6	1	105	22	93
Flora T	36	28	7	1	113	28	91
Trans Narva	36	16	8	12	62	54	56
Nomme	36	16	7	13	65	64	55
Kalev S	36	13	6	17	49	79	45
Tulevik	36	9	4	23	31	74	31
Maag	36	9	4	23	45	76	31
Kalev T	36	6	8	22	37	70	26
Vaprus	36	5	2	29	41	125	17
TVMK*	36	20	6	10	91	47	66

**TVMK were placed bottom because of financial problems*

Relegated: Vaprus (after play-off), TVMK
Promoted: Kuressaare, Flora Paide (after play-off)

FRANCE

Saturday, November 8

Bordeaux 2 (Cavenaghi 70, Chamakh 75)
Auxerre 0 Att: 22,335

Caen 0
Le Havre 1 (Dieuze 82) Att: 20,047

Grenoble 0
Marseille 3 (Ben Arfa 4, Kone 32, Cheyrou 82) Att: 19,648

Lorient 0
Nice 1 (Echouafni 24) Att: 10,023

Monaco 0
Lyon 1 (Fred 55) Att: 10,444

Nantes 1 (Moullec 4)
Toulouse 1 (Gignac 19) Att: 18,293

Sochaux 2 (Santos 29, Boudebouz 69)
Le Mans 1 (Paulo Andre 44) Att: 10,714

Sunday, November 9

Paris Saint-Germain 1 (Giuly 39)
Lille 0 Att: 36,133

Saint-Etienne 0
Rennes 3 (Pagis 13, 53, Fanni 51) Att: 24,441

Valenciennes 0
Nancy 1 (Gavanon pen 15) Att: 11,381

Saturday, November 15

Auxerre 1 (Lejeune 31)
Sochaux 0 Att: 10,552

Le Havre 1 (Alassane 48)
Paris Saint-Germain 3 (Hoarau 18, pen 90, Giuly 34) Att: 16,322

Le Mans 1 (Coutadeur 21)
Valenciennes 0 Att: 8,451

Lille 3 (Hazard 25, Obraniak 34, Vittek 70)
Saint-Etienne 0 Att: 14,882

Marseille 2 (Ziani 10, Niang pen 60)
Lorient 3 (Amalfitano 76, Abriel 84, Gameiro 87) Att: 48,878

Nancy 1 (Boucansaud og 72)
Caen 1 (Savidan 51) Att: 17,459

Toulouse 2 (Gignac 2, 19)
Grenoble 0 Att: 14,406

Sunday, November 16

Lyon 2 (Benzema 33, Kallstrom 38)
Bordeaux 1 (Cavenaghi 81) Att: 36,341

Nice 2 (Bamogo 20, Mouloungui 81)
Nantes 1 (Ndaw 8) Att: 11,750

Rennes 2 (Sow 43, Briand 54)
Monaco 1 (Cufre pen 72) Att: 21,086

Saturday, November 22

Bordeaux 1 (Gourcuff 60)
Rennes 1 (Thomert 20) Att: 25,213

Caen 1 (Lemaitre 57)
Auxerre 0 Att: 17,293

Grenoble 0
Le Havre 0 Att: 16,093

Lorient 1 (Gameiro 75)
Toulouse 0 Att: 9,578

Paris Saint-Germain 1 (Giuly 26)
Lyon 0 Att: 44,780

Saint-Etienne 0
Nice 1 (Echouafni 20) Att: 23,009

Valenciennes 2 (Saez 63, Audel 68)
Sochaux 2 (Erdinc 39, Privat 87) Att: 11,956

Sunday, November 23

Marseille 2 (Samassa 46, Zenden 90)
Lille 2 (Rami 11, Bastos 37) Att: 46,145

Monaco 3 (Alonso 49, Paulo Andre og 50, Licata 53)
Le Mans 0 Att: 6,294

Nantes 0
Nancy 1 (Hadji 74) Att: 20,635

Saturday, November 29

Auxerre 0
Monaco 1 (Pokrivac 24) Att: 12,972

Le Havre 0
Nantes 2 (Djordjevic 68, De Freitas 85) Att: 13,130

Le Mans 2 (Maiga 53, Gervinho 62)
Caen 0 Att: 9,099

Lille 1 (Bastos 7)
Lorient 1 (Rami og 35) Att: 12,763

Lyon 0
Valenciennes 0 Att: 35,988

Sochaux 0
Bordeaux 0 Att: 13,843

Sunday, November 30

Nancy 1 (Dia 75)
Saint-Etienne 2 (Machado 9, Gigliotti 43) Att: 17,328

Rennes 1 (Cheyrou 45)
Paris Saint-Germain 0 Att: 27,551

Toulouse 0
Marseille 0 Att: 33,572

FRANCE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lyon	16	10	4	2	21	10	34
Rennes	16	7	8	1	21	11	29
Marseille	16	7	7	2	31	20	28
Nice	15	8	4	3	20	14	28
Bordeaux	16	7	5	4	22	14	26
PSG	16	8	2	6	17	13	26
Toulouse	16	7	5	4	13	11	26
Lille	16	6	7	3	23	17	25
Le Mans	16	7	3	6	22	20	24
Monaco	16	6	4	6	17	15	22
Caen	16	5	6	5	20	17	21
Lorient	16	5	5	6	20	20	20
Grenoble	15	5	5	5	11	14	20
Auxerre	16	5	4	7	13	15	19
Nancy	16	4	7	5	13	16	19
Nantes	16	4	3	9	12	23	15
Saint-Etienne	16	4	1	11	10	25	13
Le Havre	16	3	3	10	12	26	12
Sochaux	16	1	8	7	14	21	11
Valenciennes	16	2	5	9	10	20	11

LEADING GOALSCORERS

9 Karim Benzema (Lyon)
8 Fernando Cavenaghi (Bordeaux)
8 Andre-Pierre Gignac (Toulouse)
8 Guillaume Hoarau (Paris Saint-Germain)
7 Steve Savidan (Caen)

GERMANY

Friday, November 7

Koln 2 (Geromel 42, Sanou 71)
Hannover 1 (Schlaudraff 16) Att: 47,000

Saturday, November 8

Arminia Bielefeld 0
Monchengladbach 2 (Marin 6, 80) Att: 24,600

Bochum 0
Werder Bremen 0 Att: 27,237

Hamburg 2 (Petric 9, Olic 33)
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Hajnal 48) Att: 57,000

Karlsruhe 3 (Da Silva 37, Sebastian 60, Iashvili 76)
Bayer Leverkusen 3 (Helmes 1, Kiessling 17, Kadlec 24) Att: 28,238

Wolfsburg 3 (Grafite pen 36, 55, 80)
Energie Cottbus 0 Att: 23,010

Sunday, November 9

Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Limberopoulos 18, 66)
Stuttgart 2 (Lanig 71, Gomez 87) Att: 51,000

Hertha Berlin 1 (Voronin 70)
1899 Hoffenheim 0 Att: 58,862

Schalke 1 (Farfan 5)
Bayern Munich 2 (Toni 3, Ribery 31) Att: 61,673

Friday, November 14
Hannover 1 (Schlaudraff 62)
Bochum 1 (Fromlowitz og 66) Att: 30,827

Saturday, November 15
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Kiessling 30, Helmes 41)
Schalke 1 (Kuranyi 85) Att: 19,200

Borussia Dortmund 4 (Subotic 5, 26, Hajnal 19, Felipe Santana 69)
Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Att: 72,200

Energie Cottbus 1 (Cagdas 80)
Karlsruhe 0 Att: 12,527

Hertha Berlin 2 (Cicero 46, Domovchiyski 49)
Hamburg 1 (Petric 12) Att: 48,285

1899 Hoffenheim 3 (Ibisevic 23, Carlos Eduardo 37, Obasi 69)
Wolfsburg 2 (Grafite 27, Dzeko 40) Att: 26,000

Monchengladbach 2 (Daems 79, Bradley 81)
Bayern Munich 2 (Toni 21, Ribery pen 65) Att: 54,067

Stuttgart 0
Arminia Bielefeld 0 Att: 52,000

Sunday, November 16
Werder Bremen 3 (Diego pen 15, Naldo 45, Hugo Almeida 55)
Koln 1 (Novakovic 48) Att: 42,100

Friday, November 21
Karlsruhe 0
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Zidan 20) Att: 29,657

Saturday, November 22
Arminia Bielefeld 2 (Wichniarek 53, Halfar 69)
Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Helmes 78) Att: 20,700

Bayern Munich 4 (Ribery 29, Demichelis 38, Klose 54, Toni 59)
Energie Cottbus 1 (Skela 25) Att: 69,000

Bochum 2 (Sestak 50, Mieciel 74)
Hertha Berlin 3 (Raffael 25, Kacar 33, Cicero 39) Att: 18,248

Eintracht Frankfurt 4 (Limberopoulos 25, 86, Russ 40, Fenin 90)
Hannover 0 Att: 39,600

Koln 1 (Petit 78)
1899 Hoffenheim 3 (Ba 32, Ibisevic 67, 88) Att: 50,000

Schalke 3 (Altintop 17, 45, Farfan pen 24)
Monchengladbach 1 (Friend 30) Att: 61,673

Wolfsburg 4 (Grafite 51, 76, Dzeko 79, 85)
Stuttgart 1 (Lanig 17) Att: 26,897

Sunday, November 23
Hamburg 2 (Guerrero 6, Olic 74)
Werder Bremen 1 (Diego 24) Att: 56,121

Friday, November 28
Hertha Berlin 2 (Kacar 24, Pantelic 86)
Koln 1 (Novakovic 45) Att: 40,704

Saturday, November 29
Bayer Leverkusen 0
Bayern Munich 2 (Toni 59, Klose 82) Att: 19,200

Hannover 3 (Hanke 12, 18, Forsseli 44)
Karlsruhe 2 (Da Silva pen 48, Stindl 87) Att: 32,417

1899 Hoffenheim 3 (Ibisevic 5, Carlos Eduardo 11, Copado pen 89)
Arminia Bielefeld 0 Att: 26,000

Monchengladbach 1 (Gohouri 59)
Energie Cottbus 3 (Bradley og 17, Sorensen 51, Jula 85) Att: 36,454

Werder Bremen 5 (Pizarro 11, 20, 62, Diego pen 44, Hunt 75)
Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Att: 40,087

Sunday, November 30
Bochum 1 (Sestak 39)
Hamburg 1 (Olic 70) Att: 23,157

Borussia Dortmund 0
Wolfsburg 0 Att: 67,100

Stuttgart 2 (Simak 79, Gomez 83)
Schalke 0 Att: 55,800

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hoffenheim	15	11	1	3	40	20	34
Bayern	15	9	4	2	35	21	31
Hertha Berlin	15	9	3	3	23	19	30
B Leverkusen	15	9	1	5	32	19	28
Hamburg	15	8	3	4	23	23	27
B Dortmund	15	6	7	2	25	18	25
Werder	15	6	5	4	37	26	23
Wolfsburg	15	6	5	4	32	22	23
Schalke	15	6	5	4	22	15	23
Stuttgart	15	6	3	6	21	21	21
Koln	15	6	1	8	16	22	19
E Frankfurt	15	4	4	7	19	28	16
Hannover	15	4	4	7	18	29	16
A Bielefeld	15	2	6	7	14	26	12
E Cottbus	15	3	3	9	11	25	12
Bochum	15	1	8	6	18	24	11
M'gladbach	15	3	2	10	16	30	11
Karlsruhe	15	3	1	11	14	28	10

LEADING GOALSCORERS
17 Vedad Ibisevic (1899 Hoffenheim)
11 Grafite (Wolfsburg)
11 Patrick Helmes (Bayer Leverkusen)
10 Claudio Pizarro (Werder Bremen)
9 Milivoje Novakovic (Koln)
9 Artur Wichniarek (Arminia Bielefeld)

GREECE

Nov 8: Panserraikos 1 OFI 2; PAOK 2 Panionios 0; Xanthi 1 AEK 1.
Nov 9: Asteras 0 Panthrakikos 0; Thrasyvoulos 1 Aris 2; Ergotelis 2 Larisa 1; Iraklis 1 Levadiakos 0; Panathinaikos 0 Olympiakos 0.
Nov 15: Larisa 1 Panathinaikos 1; Aris 1 Asteras 1; AEK 0 Panserraikos 0.
Nov 16: Levadiakos 2 OFI 1; Ergotelis 1 Thrasyvoulos 2; Panthrakikos 0 Xanthi 0; Olympiakos 2 PAOK 0; Panionios 0 Iraklis 2.
Nov 22: Panserraikos 1 Panthrakikos 2; Iraklis 0 Olympiakos 3; Panathinaikos 3 Thrasyvoulos 0.
Nov 23: Panionios 1 Levadiakos 0; Asteras 3 Ergotelis 1; OFI 1 AEK 1; Xanthi 1 Aris 1; PAOK 1 Larisa 0.
Nov 29: Larisa 2 Iraklis 0; Thrasyvoulos 1 PAOK 2; Panathinaikos 1 Asteras 1.
Nov 30: Aris 2 Panserraikos 0; Levadiakos 0 AEK 0; Ergotelis 0 Xanthi 0; Olympiakos 4 Panionios 1; Panthrakikos 2 OFI 0.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	12	9	2	1	23	4	29
PAOK	12	7	4	1	14	6	25
Xanthi	12	5	6	1	9	4	21
Panathinaikos	12	5	5	2	19	11	20
Aris	12	5	3	4	12	11	18
Panthrakikos	12	5	3	4	9	10	18
AEK	12	3	8	1	14	13	17
Larisa	12	4	4	4	16	12	16
Ergotelis	12	4	4	4	15	17	16
Panionios	12	4	2	6	14	18	14
Asteras	12	2	7	3	11	11	13
Levadiakos	12	3	4	5	6	11	13
Iraklis	12	2	5	5	8	13	11
Panserraikos	12	2	3	7	8	17	9
OFI	12	1	5	6	12	21	8
Thrasyvoulos	12	2	1	9	10	21	7

HOLLAND

Friday, November 7
De Graafschap 0
NAC 2 (Amoah 74, 90) Att: 11,900

Saturday, November 8
Heracles 0
Vitesse 0 Att: 8,500

NEC 1 (Wisgerhof 12)
PSV 0 Att: 12,500

Willem II 2 (Boutahar 28, 73)
Roda JC 1 (Yulu-Matondo 88) Att: 12,500

Sunday, November 9
Ajax 5 (Huntelaar 16, Suarez 21, Sno 41, Bakircioglu 73, Leonardo 84)
Sparta 2 (John 56, Rose 88) Att: 48,852

AZ 3 (Ari 36, 58, El Hamdaoui 40)
Twente 0 Att: 16,493

Den Haag 0
Heerenveen 1 (Kalou 86) Att: 10,150

Feyenoord 5 (Van Bronckhorst 5, Biseswar 27, 31, El Ahmadi 89, Makaay 90)
Utrecht 2 (Schut 33, Nesu 57) Att: 43,000

Groningen 5 (Van de Laak 15, 51, Lovre 19, Andersson 23, Berg 75)
Volendam 0 Att: 21,581

Friday, November 14
NAC 3 (Cairo 54, De Graaf 62, Zwaanswijk pen 73)
Heracles 0 Att: 16,615

Saturday, November 15
Den Haag 0
Willem II 1 (Demouge 90) Att: 8,500

Heerenveen 3 (Pranjic 9, 45, Beerens 41)
Utrecht 2 (Boussaboun 6, Cornelisse 45) Att: 25,000

Roda JC 3 (Cisse 5, Janssen 38, 46)
NEC 0 Att: 10,500

Sparta 4 (Poepon 72, Dissels 80, Knol pen 82, Godee 89)
Volendam 0 Att: 10,550

Sunday, November 16
Ajax 4 (Suarez 27, Sulejmani 74, Pieters og 78, Leonardo 90)
PSV 1 (Afellay 56) Att: 49,665

Groningen 3 (Holla 29, Granqvist 77, Berg 89)
De Graafschap 0 Att: 21,906

Twente 1 (Nkufo pen 13)
Feyenoord 1 (Makaay pen 53) Att: 23,280

Vitesse 1 (Kolk 51)
AZ 1 (Ari 18) Att: 22,739

Friday, November 21
Volendam 3 (De Lange 6, De Wit 40, Hofstede 51)
Roda JC 1 (Oper 16) Att: 4,633

Saturday, November 22
De Graafschap 3 (Keller 20, 40, Buijs 45)
Sparta 3 (Dissels 15, Slot 55, Knol 90) Att: 12,000

NAC 1 (De Graaf 57)
NEC 1 (Schone 27) Att: 16,850

PSV 4 (Rodriguez 15, Afellay 29, Lazovic 32, Dzsudzsak 38)
Heracles 0 Att: 33,000

Twente 6 (Nkufo 23, 41, 72, Perez 35, 45, Arnautovic 47)
Heerenveen 0 Att: 22,800

Sunday, November 23
AZ 2 (De Zeeuw pen 22, Ari 51)
Ajax 0 Att: 17,149

Feyenoord 3 (Makaay 16, Fer 42, Bruins 57)
Den Haag 1 (Knopper 10) Att: 41,500

Utrecht 4 (Keller 30, Van der Gun 49, Boussaboun 66, 74)
Vitesse 0 Att: 19,000

Willem II 3 (Akgun 17, Demouge 22, 28)
Groningen 0 Att: 13,500

Friday, November 28
Groningen 0
AZ 2 (Mendes da Silva 27, Ari 87) Att: 22,016

Saturday, November 29
De Graafschap 1 (Oost 82)
Roda JC 1 (Hadouir 64) Att: 11,900

Den Haag 1 (Resodihardjo 77)
Twente 2 (Janssen 9, Arnautovic 80) Att: 7,200

Heerenveen 2 (Beerens 16, 65)
PSV 2 (Koevermans 81, Nijland 86) Att: 26,000

Heracles 1 (Overtoom 67)
Willem II 0 Att: 8,413

Sunday, November 30
Ajax 1 (Sulejmani 61)
Utrecht 1 (Keller 34) Att: 45,929

NEC 6 (Schone 9, 63, Zomer 13, Van Beukering 16, 42, Ntibazonkiza 39)
Volendam 1 (Sheotahul 76) Att: 12,000

Sparta 4 (Slot 22, Poepon 29, 42, Strootman 67)
NAC 0 Att: 10,105

Vitesse 1 (Verhaegh 76)
Feyenoord 1 (Makaay 3) Att: 17,345

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AZ	13	9	2	2	31	11	29
Ajax	13	8	2	3	27	16	26
NAC	13	8	2	3	23	15	26
Twente	13	7	3	3	21	13	24
Groningen	13	7	2	4	26	11	23
PSV	13	7	1	5	24	14	22
NEC	13	6	4	3	22	14	22
Willem II	13	6	3	4	19	17	21
Heerenveen	13	5	5	3	27	30	20
Utrecht	13	5	3	5	18	17	18
Feyenoord	13	4	4	5	26	20	16
Heracles	13	4	4	5	14	20	16
Sparta	13	4	3	6	21	29	15
Vitesse	13	2	5	6	11	23	11
Den Haag	13	3	1	9	14	22	10
Roda JC	13	2	4	7	14	25	10
De Graafschap	13	2	3	8	9	25	9
Volendam	13	2	1	10	14	39	7

LEADING GOALSCORERS
13 Mounir El Hamdaoui (AZ)
11 Matthew Amoah (NAC)
11 Frank Demouge (Willem II)
10 Danijel Pranjic (Heerenveen)
8 Marcus Berg (Groningen)
7 Ibrahim Afellay (PSV)

HUNGARY

Nov 7: Ujpest 1 Gyor 1.
Nov 8: Kecskemet 0 MTK 0; Debrecen 1 Diosgyor 2; Nyiregyhaza 1 Fehervar 1; Kaposvar 4 Vasas 0; Szombathely 0 Paks 1; Rakospalota 2 Honved 5.
Nov 9: Siofok 1 Zalaegerszeg 4.
Nov 14: Paks 0 Debrecen 2.
Nov 15: MTK 0 Rakospalota 2; Vasas 1 Nyiregyhaza 1; Zalaegerszeg 3 Szombathely 2; Honved 2 Kaposvar 1; Diosgyor 1 Kecskemet 0; Gyor 0 Siofok 0.
Nov 16: Fehervar 0 Ujpest 0.

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Debrecen	15	10	3	2	33	14	33
Ujpest	15	8	6	1	27	17	30
Vasas	15	9	1	5	27	23	28
Szombathely	15	7	3	5	22	13	24
Nyiregyhaza	15	6	6	3	20	14	24
Zalaegerszeg	15	6	4	5	25	22	22
Kaposvar	15	6	3	6	26	21	21
Kecskemet	15	6	3	6	23	19	21
Fehervar	15	6	3	6	17	19	21
MTK	15	5	4	6	20	22	19
Honved	15	5	4	6	22	25	19
Diosgyor	15	5	4	6	17	26	19
Gyor	15	5	3	7	23	19	18
Paks	15	5	3	7	21	31	18
Siofok	15	2	2	11	9	27	8
Rakospalota	15	2	2	11	19	39	8

ITALY

Saturday, November 8
Bologna 1 (Cicinho og 90)
Roma 1 (Totti 68) Att: 32,216

Torino 1 (Saumel 89)
Palermo 0 Att: 16,169

Sunday, November 9
Catania 2 (Mascara 37, Sabato 87)
Cagliari 1 (Jeda 6) Att: 16,972

Chievo 0
Juventus 2 (Del Piero 40, Iaquinta 54) Att: 26,578

Fiorentina 2 (Felipe Melo 20, Gilardino 23)
Atalanta 1 (Floccari pen 77) Att: 31,114

Genoa 4 (Milito pen 54, 74, 90, Sculli 81)
Reggina 0 Att: 24,210

Inter 1 (Cruz 90)
Udinese 0 Att: 51,595

Lazio 3 (Zarate 58, Rocchi 86, 90)
Siena 0 Att: 30,799

Lecce 1 (Esposito 90)
Milan 1 (Ronaldinho 79) Att: 29,658

Napoli 2 (Mannini 23, Zalayeta 74)
Sampdoria 0 Att: 47,782

Thursday, November 13
Juventus 4 (Grygera 6, Amauri 26, Iaquinta 85, Papastathopoulos og 90)
Genoa 1 (Milito pen 88) Att: 16,000

Saturday, November 15
Palermo 0
Inter 2 (Ibrahimovic 46, 62) Att: 34,203

Sunday, November 16
Atalanta 3 (Ferreira Pinto 62, Manfredini 89, Floccari 90)
Napoli 1 (Hamsik pen 73) Att: 11,705

Cagliari 1 (Acquafresca pen 31)
Fiorentina 0 Att: 10,125

Catania 3 (Mascara 8, 39, 80)
Torino 2 (Colombo 6, Amoruso pen 50) Att: 15,229

Milan 1 (Kaka pen 15)
Chievo 0 Att: 68,403

Roma 1 (Julio Baptista 50)
Lazio 0 Att: 61,998

Sampdoria 3 (Delvecchio 11, Cassano 14, Stankevicius 60)
Lecce 2 (Tiribocchi 55, 82) Att: 21,427

Siena 1 (Ghezzal 22)
Bologna 1 (Di Vaio pen 45) Att: 10,566

Udinese 0
Reggina 1 (Brienza 60) Att: 14,455

Saturday, November 22
Fiorentina 4 (Mutu pen 52, Montolivo 63, 78, Gilardino 79)
Udinese 2 (Floro Flores 29, Di Natale pen 83) Att: 28,000

Inter 1 (Muntari 72)
Juventus 0 Att: 60,000

Sunday, November 23
Bologna 1 (Di Vaio 20)
Palermo 1 (Succi 90) Att: 18,387

Chievo 0
Siena 2 (Galloppa pen 83, Maccarone pen 88) Att: 9,243

Lazio 1 (Dabo 80)
Genoa 1 (Milito 69) Att: 31,110

Lecce 0
Roma 3 (Vucinic 11, Juan 38, Totti 49) Att: 11,082

Napoli 2 (Hamsik 9, Lavezzi 84)
Cagliari 2 (Lopez 56, Conti 90) Att: 38,516

Reggina 3 (Cozza 10, Corradi 21, 79)
Atalanta 1 (Doni 90) Att: 9,377

Sampdoria 3 (Bellucci 6, Cassano 62, 90)
Catania 0 Att: 21,438

Torino 2 (Stellone 25, Rosina pen 78)
Milan 2 (Alexandre Pato 29, Ronaldinho 34) Att: 22,627

Saturday, November 29
Catania 1 (Paolucci 62)
Lecce 1 (Castillo 69)

Juventus 4 (Camoranesi 28, Amauri 44, Chiellini 62, Del Piero pen 74)
Reggina 0

Sunday, November 30
Atalanta 2 (Valdes 54, Floccari 68)
Lazio 0 Att: 10,449

Cagliari 1 (Jeda 48)
Sampdoria 0 Att: 8,000

Genoa 1 (Sculli 55)
Bologna 1 (Di Vaio 63) Att: 24,027

Inter 2 (Cordoba 16, Muntari 25)
Napoli 1 (Lavezzi 36) Att: 45,595

Palermo 3 (Miccoli 50, Cavani 60, Simplicio 80)
Milan 1 (Ronaldinho pen 83) Att: 33,998

Roma 1 (Totti 59)
Fiorentina 0 Att: 37,565

Siena 1 (Maccarone 19)
Torino 0 Att: 9,556

Udinese 0
Chievo 1 (Felipe og 87) Att: 13,898

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter	14	10	3	1	22	8	33
Juventus	14	8	3	3	21	9	27
Milan	14	8	3	3	20	13	27
Napoli	14	7	3	4	20	15	24
Lazio	14	7	2	5	22	16	23
Fiorentina	14	7	2	5	18	13	23
Genoa	14	6	4	4	21	16	22
Catania	14	6	4	4	15	15	22
Udinese	14	6	3	5	21	15	21
Atalanta	14	6	2	6	16	15	20
Palermo	14	6	2	6	19	19	20
Siena	14	5	4	5	12	12	19
Cagliari	14	5	2	7	15	17	17
Roma	13	5	2	6	15	18	17
Sampdoria	13	4	4	5	13	16	16
Lecce	14	2	7	5	13	19	13
Torino	14	3	3	8	14	20	12
Reggina	14	3	2	9	12	28	11
Bologna	14	2	4	8	12	23	10
Chievo	14	2	3	9	7	21	9

LEADING GOALSCORERS
11 Diego Milito (Genoa)
9 Alberto Gilardino (Fiorentina)
8 Marco Di Vaio (Bologna)

LATVIA

Championship pool

LATVIA – CHAMPIONSHIP POOL – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ventspils	28	19	6	3	53	14	63
Metalurgs	28	14	11	3	48	25	53
Skonto	28	15	7	6	43	31	52
Dinaburg	28	10	8	10	32	31	38
Daugava D	28	10	7	11	40	35	37
FK Riga	28	10	3	15	36	55	33

Relegated: Olimps
Promoted: Daugava Riga

LITHUANIA

LITHUANIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ekranas	28	20	5	3	46	12	65
Kaunas	28	16	7	5	51	17	55
Vetra	28	14	6	8	33	24	48
Suduva	28	14	6	8	35	25	48
Zalgiris	28	6	10	12	27	41	28
Atlantas	28	7	7	14	31	44	28
Siauliai	28	5	9	14	24	41	24
Silute	28	3	4	21	19	62	13

NORWAY

NORWAY – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stabaek	26	16	6	4	58	24	54
Fredrikstad	26	14	6	6	38	28	48
Tromso	26	12	8	6	36	23	44
Bodo/Glimt	26	12	6	8	37	38	42
Rosenborg	26	11	6	9	40	34	39
Viking	26	11	6	9	38	32	39
Lyn	26	11	5	10	38	34	38
Brann	26	8	9	9	36	36	33
Molde	26	7	10	9	39	43	31
Valerenga	26	8	6	12	31	37	30
Stromsgodset	26	8	5	13	33	44	29
Lillestrom	26	7	7	12	30	40	28
Aalesund	26	7	4	15	29	42	25
Ham-Kam	26	5	6	15	22	50	21

Relegated: Ham-Kam
Promoted: Odd Grenland, Sandefjord, Start

POLAND

Nov 7: Belchatow 3 Cracovia 0; Polonia Bytom 1 Legia 0.
Nov 8: Slask 0 Piast 1; Wisla 0 LKS 0; Polonia Warsaw 0 Jagiellonia 0; Ruch 0 Arka 0.
Nov 9: Odra 0 Gornik 0; Lechia 0 Lech 3.
Nov 11: Cracovia 0 Arka 0; Polonia Warsaw 1 Piast 0; Belchatow 1 Legia 0; Ruch 1 Slask 2.
Nov 12: Lechia 2 LKS 1; Polonia Bytom 1 Lech 1; Odra 0 Wisla 2; Jagiellonia 1 Gornik 0.
Nov 14: Arka 2 Belchatow 0; Legia 4 Slask 0.
Nov 15: Piast 0 Odra 1; Jagiellonia 2 Polonia Bytom 2; Wisla 3 Lechia 0; LKS 0 Ruch 1.
Nov 16: Gornik 0 Cracovia 2; Lech 2 Polonia Warsaw 0.
Nov 21: Polonia Bytom 2 LKS 3; Ruch 0 Legia 1.
Nov 22: Belchatow 2 Jagiellonia 0; Odra 0 Arka 0; Polonia Warsaw 2 Gornik 0; Cracovia 0 Lech 1.
Nov 23: Lechia 0 Piast 0; Slask 2 Wisla 1.
Nov 28: Belchatow 1 Gornik 0; Lechia 2 Legia 3.
Nov 29: Cracovia 2 Jagiellonia 0; Polonia Bytom 1 Piast 0; Ruch 1 Wisla 0; Slask 3 LKS 0.
Nov 30: Odra 0 Lech 1; Polonia Warsaw 0 Arka 0.

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lech	16	10	3	3	29	11	33
Legia	16	10	3	3	28	10	33
Polonia W	16	9	5	2	23	9	32
Belchatow	16	10	1	5	22	15	31
Wisla	16	9	3	4	25	12	30
Slask	16	7	6	3	23	19	27
Ruch	16	6	4	6	11	14	22
Polonia B	16	6	3	7	21	23	21
Arka	16	5	5	6	14	16	20
Jagiellonia	16	4	6	6	13	18	18
Lechia	16	5	3	8	14	24	18
Odra	16	4	5	7	13	19	17
Piast	16	4	3	9	8	15	15
Cracovia	16	3	5	8	9	19	14
LKS	16	3	4	9	9	23	13
Gornik	16	2	3	11	7	22	9

PORTUGAL

Friday, November 14
Trofense 0
Maritimo 2 (Djalma 62, Olberdam 71)

Saturday, November 15
Porto 2 (Lopez 66, Farias 88)
Guimaraes 0

Sporting Lisbon 0
Leixoes 1 (Sousa 67)

Sunday, November 16
Benfica 1 (Sidnei 51)
Estrela Amadora 0

Nacional 0
Rio Ave 0

Pacos Ferreira 2 (Paulo Sousa 43, William 45)
Naval 1 (Bolivia 17)

Sporting Braga 1 (Meyong 31)
Setubal 0

Monday, November 17
Belenenses 1 (Vinicius 14)
Academica 0

Friday, November 21
Rio Ave 1 (Rogerio Matias 45)
Leixoes 2 (Wesley 36, China 68)

Saturday, November 22
Maritimo 0
Sporting Braga 0

Naval 0
Sporting Lisbon 1 (Liedson 15)

Sunday, November 23
Academica 0
Benfica 2 (Ruben Amorim 32, Cardozo pen 49)

Guimaraes 0
Pacos Ferreira 0

Nacional 1 (Luiz Alberto 23)
Trofense 0

Monday, November 24
Setubal 2 (Anderson 44, Elias 90)
Belenenses 0

Friday, November 28
Leixoes 1 (Ze Manel 73)
Naval 1 (Michel Simplicio 90)

Saturday, November 29
Belenenses 0
Maritimo 2 (Djalma 37, Baba 61)

Sunday, November 30
Pacos Ferreira 1 (William 80)
Estrela Amadora 0

Sporting Braga 1 (Matheus 27)
Nacional 0

Sporting Lisbon 2 (Helder Postiga 8, Liedson 21)
Guimaraes 0

Trofense 2 (Pinheiro 62, Valdomiro 82)
Rio Ave 0

Monday, December 1
Benfica 2 (Katsouranis 48, Suazo 58)
Setubal 2 (Laionel 35, Anderson 90)

Porto 2 (Rodriguez 24, Raul Meireles 49)
Academica 1 (Cris 35)

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leixoes	10	7	2	1	16	10	23
Benfica	10	6	4	0	18	10	22
Sporting L	10	6	1	3	11	6	19
Maritimo	10	5	3	2	13	5	18
Porto	9	5	2	2	13	7	17
Nacional	10	5	2	3	13	10	17
S Braga	10	4	4	2	11	5	16
Naval	10	3	3	4	11	11	12
Setubal	10	3	2	5	7	10	11
E Amadora	9	3	2	4	5	10	11
Guimaraes	10	2	4	4	7	11	10
P Ferreira	10	2	3	5	11	16	9
Academica	10	2	3	5	5	10	9
Trofense	10	2	1	7	8	15	7
Rio Ave	10	1	4	5	6	11	7
Belenenses	10	1	4	5	6	14	7

LEADING GOALSCORERS
7 William (Pacos Ferreira)
6 Wesley (Leixoes)

ROMANIA

Nov 7: Gloria Buzau 0 Univ Craiova 2; Urziceni 3 Otelul 1.
Nov 8: Gaz Metan 1 Poli Iasi 0; Pandurii 1 Gloria Bistrita 1; Arges 3 Farul 0; Timisoara 0 Dinamo 3.
Nov 9: Brasov 1 CFR 1; Otopeni 0 Vaslui 2; Rapid 0 Steaua 0.
Nov 15: Farul 1 Pandurii 1; Univ Craiova 0 Rapid 0; Steaua 2 Timisoara 2.
Nov 16: Otelul 2 Brasov 1; Vaslui 3 Gloria Buzau 0; CFR 2 Arges 0; Dinamo 0 Urziceni 1.
Nov 17: Gloria Bistrita 1 Gaz Metan 0; Poli Iasi 2 Otopeni 0.
Nov 21: Pandurii 2 CFR 1; Univ Craiova 0 Steaua 0.
Nov 22: Brasov 2 Dinamo 0; Gloria Buzau 1 Poli Iasi 1; Rapid 2 Vaslui 2.
Nov 23: Gaz Metan 0 Farul 1; Otopeni 0 Gloria Bistrita 1; Arges 3 Otelul 2; Urziceni 1 Timisoara 1.
Nov 28: Vaslui 1 Univ Craiova 1; Farul 1 Otopeni 0.
Nov 29: Otelul 0 Pandurii 0; Timisoara 4 Brasov 0; Poli Iasi 1 Rapid 2; Dinamo 2 Arges 0.
Dec 1: Gloria Bistrita 2 Gloria Buzau 0; CFR 2 Gaz Metan 1; Steaua 1 Urziceni 0.

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo	17	11	2	4	25	13	35
Urziceni	17	11	1	5	28	14	34
Timisoara*	17	10	5	2	32	20	29
CFR	17	8	5	4	24	13	29
Steaua	17	7	8	2	24	13	29
Univ Craiova	17	7	7	3	23	16	28
Rapid	17	8	4	5	22	17	28
Arges	17	8	3	6	24	21	27
Vaslui	17	7	4	6	19	16	25
Otelul	17	6	5	6	22	20	23
Brasov	17	5	8	4	14	13	23
Gloria Bistrita	17	6	3	8	17	17	21
Pandurii	17	5	6	6	17	22	21
Farul	17	5	4	8	14	24	19
Poli Iasi	17	4	4	9	13	25	16
Gaz Metan	17	4	3	10	18	31	15
Otopeni	17	2	3	12	14	31	9
Gloria Buzau	17	0	3	14	6	30	3

**6pts deducted for non-compliance with CAS ruling relating to club identity*

RUSSIA

Nov 7: Khimki 1 Tom 1.
Nov 8: Krylia Sovetov 2 Spartak Nalchik 0; Shinnik 0 Saturn 1.
Nov 9: Amkar 1 Zenit 1; Spartak Moscow 0 Lokomotiv 1; Dynamo 2 Luch-Energiya 0; Rubin 1 Terek 3.
Nov 10: FC Moscow 1 CSKA 4.
Nov 16: Terek 0 Shinnik 0; Zenit 1 Dynamo 1; CSKA 4 Rubin 0; Tom 0 Amkar 1; Saturn 0 Krylia Sovetov 0; Lokomotiv 3 FC Moscow 2; Spartak Nalchik 1 Khimki 2; Luch-Energiya 2 Spartak Moscow 2.
Nov 22: Dynamo 2 Tom 0; Shinnik 1 CSKA 0; Spartak Moscow 1 Zenit 3; Krylia Sovetov 4 Terek 3; FC Moscow 3 Luch-Energiya 0; Saturn 1 Spartak Nalchik 1; Amkar 3 Khimki 1; Rubin 1 Lokomotiv 2.

RUSSIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rubin	30	18	6	6	44	26	60
CSKA	30	16	8	6	53	24	56
Dynamo	30	15	9	6	41	29	54
Amkar	30	14	9	7	31	22	51
Zenit	30	12	12	6	59	37	48
Krylia Sovetov	30	12	12	6	46	28	48
Lokomotiv	30	13	8	9	37	32	47
Spartak M	30	11	11	8	43	39	44
FC Moscow	30	9	11	10	34	36	38
Terek	30	9	8	13	28	42	35
Saturn	30	7	12	11	26	30	33
Spartak N	30	8	8	14	30	39	32
Tom	30	7	8	15	23	39	29
Khimki	30	6	9	15	34	54	27
Shinnik	30	5	7	18	25	48	22
Luch-Energiya	30	3	12	15	24	53	21

Relegated: Shinnik, Luch-Energiya
Promoted: Rostov, Kuban

SCOTLAND

Saturday, November 8
Celtic 2 (Hartley 45, McDonald 71)
Motherwell 0 Att: 56,504

Dundee United 2 (Sandaza 8, Feeney 14)
Aberdeen 1 (Mackie 66) Att: 9,490

Hamilton 1 (McCarthy 36)
Falkirk 1 (Higdon 49) Att: 2,600

Hibernian 1 (Riordan 90)
Inverness 2 (Cowie 30, Black 47) Att: 11,688

St Mirren 0
Hearts 1 (Jonsson 79) Att: 4,192

Sunday, November 9
Kilmarnock 0
Rangers 4 (Weir 50, Boyd 54, Miller 87, Whittaker 90) Att: 10,153

Tuesday, November 11
Aberdeen 2 (Considine 80, Aluko 89)
St Mirren 0 Att: 9,452

Wednesday, November 12
Celtic 3 (Sheridan 18, 75, Nakamura 84)
Kilmarnock 0 Att: 55,347

Dundee United 2 (Dods 54, Sandaza 60)
Hibernian 0 Att: 7,490

Hearts 1 (Nade 6)
Hamilton 0 Att: 12,030

Inverness 1 (Rooney 80)
Falkirk 1 (Higdon 19) Att: 3,111

Motherwell 0
Rangers 0 Att: 9,600

Saturday, November 15
Falkirk 1 (Higdon 37)
Motherwell 0 Att: 5,279

Hibernian 2 (Jones 62, Fletcher 90)
Aberdeen 2 (Mackie 40, Diamond 53) Att: 11,640

Inverness 0
Hearts 1 (Bruno Aguiar 22) Att: 4,011

Kilmarnock 2 (Hamill pen 45, Fernandez 61)
Dundee United 0 Att: 4,652

Rangers 2 (Boyd 5, Davis 10)
St Mirren 1 (Miranda 81) Att: 49,321

Sunday, November 16
Hamilton 1 (Offiong 15)
Celtic 2 (Nakamura 38, Hartley 86) Att: 5,066

Saturday, November 22
Dundee United 1 (Easton og 90)
Hamilton 1 (Offiong 8) Att: 6,108

Hearts 2 (Bruno Aguiar 18, Driver 59)
Falkirk 1 (Lovell 16) Att: 13,009

Kilmarnock 1 (Gibson 85)
Inverness 2 (Imrie 14, Wood 38) Att: 4,328

Motherwell 1 (Malcolm 42)
Hibernian 4 (Rankin 6, Shiels 50, Fletcher 61, Riordan 90) Att: 4,957

Rangers 2 (Darcheville 52, Boyd 68)
Aberdeen 0 Att: 50,166

St Mirren 1 (Hamilton 89)
Celtic 3 (Samaras 64, Nakamura 66, Sheridan 80) Att: 7,433

Saturday, November 29
Aberdeen 2 (McDonald 61, Miller pen 67)
Motherwell 0 Att: 10,302

Celtic 1 (Maloney 29)
Inverness 0 Att: 55,117

Falkirk 1 (Barr 69)
Hibernian 1 (Nish 82) Att: 6,260

Hamilton 1 (Offiong 52)
Kilmarnock 0 Att: 2,903

Hearts 2 (Zaliukas 20, Kingston 23)
Rangers 1 (Karipidis og 26) Att: 15,710

St Mirren 0
Dundee United 2 (Daly 37, pen 89) Att: 4,013

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	16	14	1	1	40	15	43
Rangers	16	11	3	2	35	13	36
Hearts	16	9	2	5	19	19	29
Dundee Utd	16	7	5	4	22	17	26
Aberdeen	16	6	3	7	17	18	21
Hibernian	16	5	5	6	20	23	20
Kilmarnock	16	6	1	9	14	22	19
Falkirk	16	4	5	7	19	22	17
Inverness	16	5	2	9	17	23	17
Motherwell	16	5	2	9	17	25	17
Hamilton	16	4	2	10	14	26	14
St Mirren	16	3	3	10	10	21	12

LEADING GOALSCORERS
11 Kris Boyd (Rangers)
9 Georgios Samaras (Celtic)

SERBIA

Nov 8: Jagodina 2 OFK 0; Javor 1 Rad 0; Cukaricki 0 Borac 1; Hajduk 1 Napredak 0; Red Star 3 Vojvodina 1.
Nov 9: Banat 0 Partizan 2.
Nov 15: Napredak 0 Partizan 4; OFK 2 Hajduk 0; Borac 2 Jagodina 1; Vojvodina 1 Javor 0; Red Star 2 Banat 1.
Nov 16: Rad 3 Cukaricki 0.
Nov 22: Banat 0 Napredak 0; Hajduk 2 Borac 0.
Nov 23: Jagodina 0 Rad 0; Javor 1 Red Star 1; Cukaricki 0 Vojvodina 1; Partizan 5 OFK 1.
Nov 29: Vojvodina 3 Jagodina 0; Red Star 2 Cukaricki 0; Javor 3 Banat 0; OFK 0 Napredak 2.
Nov 30: Rad 1 Hajduk 1; Borac 1 Partizan 0.

SERBIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Partizan	15	11	2	2	31	7	35
Vojvodina	15	10	0	5	18	9	30
Red Star	15	8	3	4	24	15	27
Javor	15	6	6	3	18	13	24
OFK	15	6	3	6	11	20	21
Hajduk	15	5	5	5	11	11	20
Jagodina	15	6	2	7	13	20	20
Borac	15	4	7	4	13	15	19
Rad	15	2	7	6	9	15	13
Cukaricki	15	3	4	8	10	17	13
Banat	15	3	4	8	8	17	13
Napredak	15	3	3	9	12	19	12

SPAIN

Saturday, November 8
Barcelona 6 (Eto'o 12, 30, 42, 44, Gudjohnsen 71, Henry 83)
Valladolid 0 Att: 58,276

Real Madrid 4 (Higuain 8, pen 37, 71, 78)
Malaga 3 (Eliseu 6, Baha 18, Apono pen 70) Att: 72,000

Sunday, November 9
Deportivo La Coruna 1 (Guardado 37)
Espanyol 0 Att: 14,000

Getafe 0
Valencia 3 (Manuel Fernandes 29, Joaquin 69, Vicente 81) Att: 10,000

Mallorca 3 (Cleber 12, Arango 58, 75)
Athletic Bilbao 3 (Iraola pen 44, Velez 79, Llorente 90) Att: 14,000

Numancia 2 (Del Pino 27, Barkero 56)
Betis 4 (Emana pen 33, Juanito 45, Mehmet Aurelio 45, 85) Att: 7,000

Osasuna 0
Atletico Madrid 0 Att: 15,000

Racing Santander 1 (Tchite 58)
Sporting Gijon 0 Att: 20,000

Sevilla 1 (Kanoute 65)
Recreativo 0 Att: 45,000

Villarreal 2 (Rossi 1, Llorente 15)
Almeria 1 (Piatti 61) Att: 20,000

Saturday, November 15
Valencia 2 (Villa pen 69, Mata 90)
Sporting Gijon 3 (Luis Moran 20, Barral 52, Diego Castro 81) Att: 43,000

Valladolid 1 (Canobbio 48)
Real Madrid 0 Att: 21,097

Sunday, November 16
Almeria 2 (Negredo 44, pen 67)
Mallorca 1 (Keita 90) Att: 16,000

Athletic Bilbao 2 (Garmendia 17, Llorente 90)
Osasuna 0 Att: 40,000

Atletico Madrid 4 (Heitinga 26, Forlan 52, 81, Rodriguez 66)
Deportivo La Coruna 1 (Luis Filipe 86) Att: 44,000

Betis 3 (Sergio Garcia 27, 71, Emana 37)
Racing Santander 1 (Munitis 86) Att: 35,000

Espanyol 3 (Moises 34, Jarque 65, Tamudo pen 73)
Numancia 4 (Nagore 15, Goiria 52, Barkero 85, Bellvis 90) Att: 18,450

Getafe 0
Sevilla 2 (Luis Fabiano 37, De Mul 90) Att: 13,000

Malaga 2 (Duda 30, Helder Rosario 90)
Villarreal 2 (Rossi 8, Llorente 50) Att: 28,000

Recreativo 0
Barcelona 2 (Messi 50, Keita 85) Att: 18,623

Saturday, November 22
Real Madrid 1 (Sneijder 39)
Recreativo 0 Att: 68,000

Sevilla 0
Valencia 0 Att: 40,000

Villarreal 0
Valladolid 3 (Jonathan Sesma 25, 43, Pedro Leon 45) Att: 17,000

Sunday, November 23
Barcelona 1 (Keita 71)
Getafe 1 (Del Moral 19) Att: 65,249

Deportivo La Coruna 3 (Ze Castro 20, Verdu pen 44, Guardado 90)
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Javi Martinez 72) Att: 12,000

Mallorca 2 (Josemi 18, Webo 67)
Malaga 2 (Ramis og 13, Baha 24) Att: 11,000

Numancia 1 (Barkero pen 90)
Atletico Madrid 1 (Forlan 34) Att: 9,500

Osasuna 3 (Pandiani 14, Pellerano og 71, Vadocz 90)
Almeria 1 (Negredo pen 7) Att: 17,000

Racing Santander 3 (Marcano 10, Serrano 26, Jonathan Pereira 59)
Espanyol 0 Att: 16,500

Sporting Gijon 1 (Diego Castro 26)
Betis 2 (Monzon 52, Emana 59) Att: 20,000

Saturday, November 29
Getafe 3 (Albin 2, 47, Uche 82)
Real Madrid 1 (Saviola 55)

Sevilla 0
Barcelona 3 (Eto'o 19, Messi 79, 90)

Sunday, November 30
Almeria 0
Deportivo La Coruna 1 (Verdu 75)

Athletic Bilbao 2 (Llorente 7, 30)
Numancia 0

Atletico Madrid 4 (Simao 20, Aguero 33, Forlan 79, 81)
Racing Santander 1 (Tchite 6)

Espanyol 0
Sporting Gijon 1 (Carmelo 29)

Malaga 4 (Apono 56, Baha 62, Luque 84, Eliseu 90)
Osasuna 2 (Nekounam 79, Miguel Flano 81)

Recreativo 1 (Adrian 83)
Villarreal 2 (Cazorla 26, Ibagaza 44)

Valencia 3 (Villa 9, Mata 19, Baraja 73)
Betis 2 (Juanma 56, Emana 64)

Valladolid 3 (Garcia Calvo 28, Vivar Dorado 56, Goitom 66)
Mallorca 0

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	13	10	2	1	40	9	32
Villarreal	13	8	4	1	23	15	28
Valencia	13	8	3	2	28	14	27
Real Madrid	13	8	2	3	30	20	26
Sevilla	13	7	3	3	18	11	24
At Madrid	13	6	3	4	28	19	21
Dep Coruna	13	6	3	4	14	14	21
Valladolid	13	6	1	6	16	17	19
Malaga	13	5	3	5	21	23	18
Sporting Gijon	13	6	0	7	21	27	18
Betis	13	5	2	6	20	18	17
Getafe	13	4	5	4	14	16	17
R Santander	13	4	3	6	15	19	15
Almeria	13	4	3	6	14	21	15
Mallorca	13	3	4	6	14	22	13
Ath Bilbao	13	3	3	7	15	23	12
Espanyol	13	3	3	7	10	19	12
Numancia	13	3	2	8	15	27	11
Osasuna	13	1	5	7	8	16	8
Recreativo	13	1	4	8	6	20	7

LEADING GOALSCORERS
14 Samuel Eto'o (Barcelona)
12 David Villa (Valencia)
9 Gonzalo Higuain (Real Madrid)
9 Lionel Messi (Barcelona)
8 Diego Forlan (Atletico Madrid)
8 Alvaro Negredo (Almeria)

SWEDEN

Nov 9: Helsingborgs 2 IFK Gothenburg 1; Orebro 3 Ljungskile 0; Djurgardens 1 Trelleborgs 3; Norrkoping 5 Hammarby 2; GAIS 0 AIK 2; Gefle 1 Elfsborg 2; Halmstads 2 Kalmar 2; Malmo 6 Sundsvall 0.

SWEDEN – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kalmar	30	20	4	6	70	32	64
Elfsborg	30	19	6	5	49	18	63
IFK Goth'burg	30	15	9	6	50	26	54
Helsingborgs	30	16	6	8	54	41	54
AIK	30	12	9	9	36	32	45
Malmo	30	12	8	10	51	46	44
Orebro	30	11	9	10	36	39	42
Halmstads	30	11	8	11	41	38	41
Hammarby	30	11	8	11	44	51	41
Trelleborgs	30	9	13	8	33	31	40
GAIS	30	9	11	10	30	36	38
Djurgardens	30	9	9	12	30	41	36
Gefle	30	7	7	16	33	42	28
Ljungskile	30	6	6	18	23	52	24
Sundsvall	30	5	7	18	26	54	22
Norrkoping	30	4	8	18	31	58	20

Relegated: Ljungskile (after play-off), Sundsvall, Norrkoping
Promoted: Orgryte, Hacken, Brommapojkarna (after play-off)

SWITZERLAND

Nov 8: Lucerne 3 Aarau 0; Bellinzona 2 Sion 1.
Nov 9: Neuchatel Xamax 2 Young Boys 3; Vaduz 0 Basle 2; Zurich 2 Grasshopper 1.
Nov 15: Aarau 0 Bellinzona 1; Sion 3 Vaduz 1.
Nov 16: Basle 1 Zurich 1; Young Boys 6 Lucerne 1; Grasshopper 1 Neuchatel Xamax 0.
Nov 29: Aarau 1 Young Boys 1; Lucerne 0 Grasshopper 3; Zurich 1 Sion 0.
Nov 30: Neuchatel Xamax 2 Basle 0.
Dec 4: Basle 3 Aarau 1.

SWITZERLAND	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Basle	17	12	2	3	35	16	38
Zurich	16	11	3	2	38	16	36
Grasshopper	16	7	7	2	27	14	28
Young Boys	16	7	5	4	33	21	26
Aarau	17	6	6	5	21	22	24
Neuchatel X	16	4	5	7	23	27	17
Sion	16	4	4	8	18	30	16
Bellinzona	15	3	5	7	17	24	14
Vaduz	15	2	5	8	9	31	11
Lucerne	16	2	2	12	11	31	8

TURKEY

Nov 7: Besiktas 5 Kocaelispor 2.
Nov 8: Ankaragucu 1 Bursaspor 1; Trabzonspor 1 Hacettepe 0.
Nov 9: Denizlispor 1 Kayserispor 0; Ankaraspor 2 Eskisehirspor 0; Antalyaspor 2 Sivasspor 1; Gaziantepspor 1 Istanbul BB 4; Konyaspor 2 Genclerbirligi 2; Fenerbahce 4 Galatasaray 1.
Nov 14: Genclerbirligi 0 Trabzonspor 1.
Nov 15: Kocaelispor 3 Denizlispor 2; Fenerbahce 2 Ankaraspor 0.
Nov 16: Sivasspor 1 Konyaspor 0; Eskisehirspor 1 Ankaragucu 3; Hacettepe 0 Gaziantepspor 0; Kayserispor 0 Antalyaspor 0; Bursaspor 0 Besiktas 0; Galatasaray 2 Istanbul BB 0.
Nov 22: Antalyaspor 0 Kocaelispor 0; Gaziantepspor 2 Genclerbirligi 0; Ankaragucu 0 Fenerbahce 0; Ankaraspor 0 Galatasaray 0.
Nov 23: Konyaspor 0 Kayserispor 0; Istanbul BB 1 Hacettepe 0; Denizlispor 4 Bursaspor 3; Trabzonspor 0 Sivasspor 0; Besiktas 2 Eskisehirspor 0.
Nov 28: Kayserispor 1 Trabzonspor 1.
Nov 29: Sivasspor 3 Gaziantepspor 0; Ankaraspor 0 Ankaragucu 1; Eskisehirspor 4 Denizlispor 3; Fenerbahce 2 Besiktas 1.
Nov 30: Bursaspor 1 Antalyaspor 1; Genclerbirligi 0 Istanbul BB 0; Kocaelispor 3 Konyaspor 0; Galatasaray 3 Hacettepe 1.

TURKEY	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Trabzonspor	13	8	4	1	19	10	28
Besiktas	13	7	4	2	23	11	25
Sivasspor	13	7	4	2	21	10	25
Galatasaray	13	7	3	3	28	16	24
Fenerbahce	13	7	2	4	26	17	23
Ankaraspor	13	7	2	4	18	10	23
Kayserispor	13	5	5	3	12	7	20
Bursaspor	13	5	3	5	19	21	18
Gaziantepspor	13	5	3	5	16	19	18
Eskisehirspor	13	4	4	5	18	22	16
Istanbul BB	13	4	4	5	12	16	16
Konyaspor	13	4	3	6	14	21	15
Ankaragucu	13	3	5	5	13	18	14
Denizlispor	13	4	2	7	21	27	14
Antalyaspor	13	2	5	6	15	21	11
Genclerbirligi	13	2	5	6	13	20	11
Hacettepe	13	2	3	8	8	18	9
Kocaelispor	13	2	3	8	16	28	9

UKRAINE

Nov 7: Kharkiv 0 Dnipro 2.
Nov 8: Zorya 2 Illichivets 1; Karpaty 3 Arsenal 2; Tavriya 0 Shakhtar 2; Metalurh Donetsk 3 Metalurh Zaporizhya 1.
Nov 9: Chornomorets 0 Vorskla 1; Kryvbas 1 Metalist 3; Dynamo 1 Lviv 0.
Nov 14: Metalurh Zaporizhya 1 Chornomorets 3.
Nov 15: Illichivets 3 Tavriya 3; Vorskla 0 Kryvbas 0; Lviv 2 Karpaty 4.
Nov 16: Arsenal 0 Metalurh Donetsk 1; Shakhtar 1 Dynamo 0; Dnipro 1 Zorya 1; Metalist 1 Kharkiv 1.
Nov 21: Metalurh Zaporizhya 0 Kryvbas 0; Shakhtar 2 Lviv 0; Metalist 2 Zorya 1.
Nov 23: Karpaty 1 Metalurh Donetsk 1; Arsenal 1 Chornomorets 0; Vorskla 2 Kharkiv 1; Dnipro 0 Tavriya 1.
Nov 28: Chornomorets 2 Metalurh Donetsk 1.
Nov 29: Zorya 0 Vorskla 2; Lviv 2 Illichivets 1; Kryvbas 1 Arsenal 0; Kharkiv 0 Metalurh Zaporizhya 2.
Nov 30: Shakhtar 1 Karpaty 0; Tavriya 0 Metalist 1; Dynamo 2 Dnipro 1.

UKRAINE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dynamo	16	13	1	2	38	8	40
Metalist	17	11	4	2	29	12	37
Metalurh D	17	10	3	4	23	12	33
Vorskla	17	9	6	2	19	10	33
Shakhtar	17	8	7	2	25	12	31
Metalurh Z	17	7	6	4	17	15	27
Dnipro	17	6	6	5	15	13	24
Zorya	17	5	6	6	18	25	21
Chornomorets	17	6	2	9	18	21	20
Karpaty	17	4	7	6	16	21	19
Kryvbas	17	4	7	6	14	20	19
Arsenal	17	3	5	9	12	21	14
Tavriya	17	3	5	9	19	31	14
Illichivets	16	3	3	10	13	26	12
Lviv	17	3	3	11	11	25	12
Kharkiv	17	0	9	8	10	25	9

SOUTH AMERICA

SUDAMERICANA CUP

Quarter-finals, 2nd legs

Nov 5
Argentinos Juniors (Arg) 2 (Scotti 9, Pavlovich 17)
Palmeiras (Bra) 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 5,967. **Ref:** Amarilla (Par)
Argentinos Juniors 3-0 on agg

Nov 5
Botafogo (Bra) 2 (Lucio Flavio pen 57, Andre Luis 65)
Estudiantes (Arg) 2 (Angeleri 4, Salgueiro 34)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 13,517. **Ref:** Chandia (Chl)
Sent off: Andre Luis (Botafogo) 69min
Estudiantes 4-2 on agg

Nov 6
Boca Juniors (Arg) 1 (Riquelme pen 56)
Internacional (Bra) 2 (Magrao 47, Alex 71)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 27,613. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)
Sent off: Forlin (Boca) 84min
Internacional 4-1 on agg

Nov 6
Guadalajara (Mex) 2 (Fabian de la Mora 59, Medina 64)
River Plate (Arg) 2 (Cabral 2, Falcao Garcia 20)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 31,311. **Ref:** Silvera (Uru)
Guadalajara 4-3 on agg

Semi-finals, 1st legs

Nov 12
Guadalajara 0
Internacional 2 (Nilmar 70, Alex 79)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Torres (Par)

Nov 13
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Mercier 47)
Estudiantes 1 (Alayes 27)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 11,565. **Ref:** Sabino (Arg)
Sent off: Desabato (Estudiantes) 73min; Sabia (Argentinos Juniors) 88min

Semi-finals, 2nd legs

Nov 19
Internacional 4 (D'Alessandro pen 19, 36, Nilmar 43, 70)
Guadalajara 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 37,703. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)
Sent off: Medina (Guadalajara) 42min
Internacional 6-0 on agg

Nov 20
Estudiantes 1 (Calderon 62)
Argentinos Juniors 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,962. **Ref:** Pezzota (Arg)
Sent off: Quiroga (Argentinos Juniors) 80min; Brana (Estudiantes) 90min
Estudiantes 2-1 on agg

Final, 1st leg

Nov 26
Estudiantes 0
Internacional 1 (Alex pen 34)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Amarilla (Par)
Estudiantes: Andujar - Desabato, Sanchez, Alayes (Calderon 69), Salgueiro (Fernandez 59), Veron, Diaz, Benitez, Angeleri, Boselli, Galvan (Moreno y Fabianesi 62).
Internacional: Lauro - Indio, Guinazu, Marcao, Edinho, Nilmar (Danny 90), Alex (Gustavo Nery 70), Magrao, Bolivar, D'Alessandro (Sandro 89), Alvaro.
Sent off: Guinazu 24min.

Final, 2nd leg

Dec 3
Internacional 1 (Nilmar 115)
Estudiantes 1 (Alayes 66)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 0-1. **Att:** 51,803.
Ref: Larrionda (Uru)
Internacional 2-1 on agg
Internacional: Lauro - Bolivar, Danny, Alvaro, Marcao, Edinho, Magrao (Sandro 107), Andrezinho (Gustavo Nery 62), D'Alessandro, Alex (Taison 79), Nilmar. *Sent off: Agenor (from bench) 92min.*
Estudiantes: Andujar - Angeleri, Alayes, Desabato, Cellay, Brana, Iberbia (Perez 63), Veron (Moreno y Fabianesi 97), Benitez, Boselli, Fernandez (Calderon 70). *Sent off: Brana 118min, Boselli 120min.*

ARGENTINA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Friday, November 7
Banfield 2 (Garcia 5, Bustamante 39)
Newell's Old Boys 1 (Fabbiani 22)

Rosario Central 1 (Paglialunga 38)
Lanus 2 (Lagos 51, Sand 73)

Saturday, November 8
Colon Santa Fe 2 (Fuertes pen 9, Ramirez 90)
Tigre 2 (Arruabarrena 31, Morel 79)

Estudiantes 1 (Boselli 22)
Independiente 0

Godoy Cruz 1 (Caruso 59)
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Quiroga 55)

Velez Sarsfield 0
Gimnasia La Plata 2 (Sosa 9, Niell 18)

Sunday, November 9
Arsenal 0
Boca Juniors 1 (Riquelme 90)

River Plate 3 (Abelairas 51, Falcao Garcia pen 69, Tuzzio 77)
Huracan 3 (Barcos 4, 31, Barrientos 34)

San Lorenzo 2 (Torres 46, Bergessio 84)
Gimnasia Jujuy 1 (Calandria 73)

San Martin Tucuman 0
Racing Club 2 (Fernandez 2, Peppino 31)

Friday, November 14
Gimnasia La Plata 1 (Messera 79)
San Martin Tucuman 0

Lanus 1 (Lagos 33)
Banfield 1 (Bertolo 43)

Saturday, November 15
Gimnasia Jujuy 0
Arsenal 1 (Leguizamon 66)

Huracan 0
Rosario Central 2 (Nunez 32, Caraglio 66)

Newell's Old Boys 3 (Fabbiani 59, Vangioni 80, Re 85)
San Lorenzo 3 (Barrientos 7, 14, Gonzalez pen 67)

Racing Club 0
Colon Santa Fe 2 (Fuertes 54, 71)

Tigre 2 (Morel pen 13, 45)
Godoy Cruz 0

Sunday, November 16
Argentinos Juniors 5 (Recalde 34, Hauche 44, 53, Romero 66, 87)
Estudiantes 0

Boca Juniors 2 (Forlin 58, Palacio 84)
Velez Sarsfield 3 (Uglessich 17, Cabrera 51, Cristaldo 63)

Independiente 0
River Plate 1 (Falcao Garcia 65)

Friday, November 21
Arsenal 1 (Carrera 70)
Newell's Old Boys 1 (Aguilar 31)

Banfield 0
Huracan 0

Saturday, November 22
Colon Santa Fe 0
Godoy Cruz 0

Racing Club 1 (Moralez 16)
Gimnasia La Plata 1 (Aguero 87)

Rosario Central 1 (Caraglio 10)
Independiente 2 (Ledesma 43, Rios 90)

San Lorenzo 1 (Bergessio 27)
Lanus 3 (Lagos 12, Sand 32, Salvio 43)

Sunday, November 23
Estudiantes 3 (Veron 9, Moreno y Fabianesi 29, Benitez 90)
Tigre 1 (Luna 90)

River Plate 1 (Falcao Garcia 16)
Argentinos Juniors 2 (Sabia 79, Ortigoza pen 90)

San Martin Tucuman 1 (Saavedra 59)
Boca Juniors 2 (Viatri 37, Figueroa 63)

Velez Sarsfield 2 (Ocampo 75, Cabrera 90)
Gimnasia Jujuy 0

Friday, November 28
Gimnasia La Plata 1 (Stracqualursi 80)
Colon Santa Fe 0

Independiente 0
Banfield 1 (Lopez 90)

Saturday, November 29
Argentinos Juniors 0
Rosario Central 0

Gimnasia Jujuy 1 (Loeschbor 69)
San Martin Tucuman 0

Lanus 2 (Gandolfi og 50, Blanco 59)
Arsenal 1 (Matos 41)

Sunday, November 30
Boca Juniors 2 (Riquelme pen 40, 59)
Racing Club 1 (Sosa 45)

Newell's Old Boys 1 (Insaurralde 56)
Velez Sarsfield 0

Tigre 3 (Luna 26, 41, Bardaro 90)
River Plate 1 (Salcedo 3)

Tuesday, December 2
Huracan 1 (Goltz 10)
San Lorenzo 4 (Torres 49, Chavez 61, Silvera 70, 80)

ARGENTINA – OPENING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Juniors	17	11	2	4	30	19	35
San Lorenzo	17	10	3	4	29	16	33
Tigre	17	10	3	4	27	17	33
Lanus	17	9	4	4	31	23	31
Newell's	17	7	7	3	23	16	28
Velez	17	7	5	5	22	22	26
Gimnasia LP	17	6	7	4	16	14	25
Estudiantes	16	7	3	6	21	22	24
Colon	17	5	8	4	27	21	23
Argentinos Jrs	17	5	7	5	23	23	22
Banfield	17	5	7	5	16	18	22
Arsenal	17	6	4	7	23	26	22
Racing Club	17	5	6	6	19	19	21
Gimnasia J	17	6	1	10	18	30	19
Independiente	17	4	6	7	13	17	18
San Martin T	17	4	5	8	13	17	17
Huracan	17	4	5	8	15	28	17
Rosario	17	4	3	10	18	22	15
Godoy Cruz	16	3	5	8	20	26	14
River Plate	17	2	7	8	18	26	13

LEADING GOALSCORERS
14 Jose Sand (Lanus)
12 Martin Morel (Tigre)
11 Esteban Fuertes (Colon Santa Fe)

BRAZIL

Nov 5: Figueirense 0 Fluminense 1.
Nov 8: Portuguesa 2 Sao Paulo 3; Vasco da Gama 1 Santos 0; Figueirense 0 Atletico Paranaense 2.
Nov 9: Coritiba 0 Nautico 0; Sport Recife 2 Goias 1; Cruzeiro 1 Fluminense 0; Palmeiras 0 Gremio 1; Botafogo 0 Flamengo 1; Internacional 4 Ipatinga 0; Vitoria 0 Atletico Mineiro 1.
Nov 12: Atletico Mineiro 4 Vasco da Gama 1.
Nov 15: Fluminense 3 Portuguesa 1; Nautico 5 Cruzeiro 2; Ipatinga 3 Sport Recife 0.
Nov 16: Goias 3 Botafogo 1; Flamengo 5 Palmeiras 2; Sao Paulo 3 Figueirense 1; Gremio 2 Coritiba 1; Santos 1 Internacional 0; Atletico Paranaense 2 Vitoria 1.
Nov 20: Figueirense 4 Nautico 3.
Nov 22: Botafogo 2 Atletico Paranaense 2; Portuguesa 0 Goias 0; Coritiba 5 Santos 1.
Nov 23: Vitoria 4 Gremio 2; Vasco da Gama 1 Sao Paulo 2; Cruzeiro 3 Flamengo 2; Internacional 0 Fluminense 2; Sport Recife 3 Atletico Mineiro 0; Palmeiras 2 Ipatinga 0.
Nov 30: Botafogo 1 Figueirense 3; Internacional 1 Cruzeiro 0; Vitoria 0 Palmeiras 0; Portuguesa 2 Sport Recife 2; Coritiba 0 Vasco da Gama 2; Nautico 2 Atletico Paranaense 1; Flamengo 3 Goias 3; Ipatinga 1 Gremio 4; Atletico Mineiro 0 Santos 0; Sao Paulo 1 Fluminense 1.

BRAZIL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sao Paulo	37	20	12	5	65	36	72
Gremio	37	20	9	8	57	35	69
Palmeiras	37	19	8	10	55	44	65
Cruzeiro	37	20	4	13	55	43	64
Flamengo	37	18	10	9	64	43	64
Internacional	37	15	9	13	47	44	54
Goias	37	14	11	12	57	46	53
Coritiba	37	14	11	12	52	44	53
Botafogo	37	14	8	15	50	44	50
Vitoria	37	14	7	16	46	44	49
Sport Recife	37	13	10	14	44	42	49
At Mineiro	37	12	12	13	50	59	48
Fluminense	37	11	11	15	48	47	44
Santos	37	11	11	15	44	53	44
Nautico	37	11	10	16	44	54	43
At Paranaense	37	11	9	17	40	51	42
Figueirense	37	10	11	16	46	72	41
Vasco	37	11	7	19	56	70	40
Portuguesa	37	9	11	17	47	66	38
Ipatinga	37	9	7	21	36	66	34

CHILE

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP
League stage

Nov 8: Univ de Concepcion 0 Dep Melipilla 1; Colo Colo 1 Cobresal 1.
Nov 9: Cobreloa 2 Audax Italiano 1; Osorno 1 Union Espanola 2; Antofagasta 0 Everton 1; Nublense 0 Univ Catolica 2; Santiago Morning 3 Dep La Serena 2; Rangers 1 Univ de Chile 0; O'Higgins 3 Huachipato 2.

CHILE – CLOSING – GROUP 1 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Univ de Chile	18	12	2	4	39	21	38
Colo Colo	18	10	3	5	32	19	33
U Espanola	18	7	4	7	28	32	25
Nublense	18	3	8	7	21	29	17

GROUP 2 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	18	9	3	6	25	25	30
Univ Catolica	18	9	2	7	37	33	29
Everton	18	9	1	8	28	25	28
La Serena	18	7	6	5	37	34	27
Osorno	18	3	1	14	19	39	10

GROUP 3 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Palestino	18	10	3	5	29	22	33
O'Higgins	18	8	4	6	39	35	28
S Morning	18	7	5	6	30	32	26
U Concepcion	18	5	6	7	32	32	21
Dep Melipilla	18	3	2	13	19	38	11

GROUP 4 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Huachipato	18	8	3	7	33	25	27
Cobreloa	18	8	3	7	34	32	27
Audax Italiano	18	6	6	6	25	25	24
Antofagasta	18	7	2	9	20	27	23
Cobresal	18	5	6	7	24	26	21

Group winners and the three runners-up with most points qualified automatically for quarter-finals; the runners-up with fewest points played the third-placed side with most points in the qualifying play-off for the last quarter-final berth

Qualifying play-off
Nov 12: Everton 0 Cobreloa 3.

Quarter-finals
1st legs - Nov 15/16; 2nd legs - Nov 22/23
Cobreloa v Univ de Chile
3-0, 2-3 (agg 5-3)
Huachipato v Colo Colo
1-1, 2-4 (agg 3-5)
O'Higgins v Palestino
2-2, 1-2 (agg 3-4)
Univ Catolica v Rangers
3-3, 1-1 (agg 4-4; Rangers on better league stage record)

Semi-finals
1st legs - Nov 29/30
Cobreloa 3 Colo Colo 3
Rangers 2 Palestino 2

2nd legs - Dec 6/8

COLOMBIA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP
1st stage

Nov 8: Chico 0 At Nacional 1.
Nov 9: Once Caldas 1 Pereira 0; Indep Santa Fe 3 Cucuta 0; Envigado 1 Tolima 0; Dep Pasto 0 America 0; At Huila 0 At Junior 1; Bucaramanga 1 Millonarios 1; Indep Medellin 2 La Equidad 1; Dep Cali 2 Quindio 0.
Nov 15: Tolima 2 Indep Medellin 0.
Nov 16: At Junior 3 Indep Santa Fe 1; Millonarios 2 Envigado 1; La Equidad 1 Dep Cali 0; Pereira 3 Bucaramanga 0; Quindio 1 Dep Pasto 0; Cucuta 0 Once Caldas 1; At Nacional 2 At Huila 0; America 4 Chico 2.

COLOMBIA – CLOSING – 1ST STAGE – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tolima	18	10	3	5	22	16	33
At Junior	18	10	1	7	27	19	31
At Nacional	18	9	3	6	20	19	30
America	18	8	5	5	25	17	29
Ind Medellin	18	9	2	7	24	19	29
Pereira	18	8	5	5	23	20	29
La Equidad	18	8	5	5	18	16	29
Dep Cali	18	9	1	8	30	21	28
Millonarios	18	8	4	6	26	18	28
Once Caldas	18	7	6	5	20	20	27
Ind Santa Fe	18	7	5	6	18	15	26
Envigado	18	5	6	7	19	19	21
Quindio	18	5	6	7	16	22	21
Chico	18	6	2	10	17	24	20
Bucaramanga	18	4	8	6	13	23	20
Dep Pasto	18	3	7	8	9	17	16
At Huila	18	3	6	9	17	26	15
Cucuta	18	4	3	11	9	22	15

Top eight qualified for play-offs

Play-offs
Group A
Nov 22: Indep Medellin 2 Tolima 1.
Nov 23: La Equidad 0 At Nacional 0.
Nov 26: At Nacional 1 Indep Medellin 1; Tolima 2 La Equidad 1.
Nov 30: At Nacional 1 Tolima 1; La Equidad 2 Indep Medellin 3.

COLOMBIA – CLOSING – PLAY-OFFS – GP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ind Medellin	3	2	1	0	6	4	7
Tolima	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
At Nacional	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
La Equidad	3	0	1	2	3	5	1

Group B
Nov 22: At Junior 2 Dep Cali 0.
Nov 23: America 3 Pereira 0.
Nov 26: Dep Cali 2 America 2; Pereira 3 At Junior 2.
Nov 30: At Junior 1 America 1; Dep Cali 3 Pereira 0.

COLOMBIA – CLOSING – PLAY-OFFS – GP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America	3	1	2	0	6	3	5
At Junior	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Dep Cali	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Pereira	3	1	0	2	3	8	3

ECUADOR

OVERALL CHAMPIONSHIP
PLAY-OFFS

Nov 8: Macara 0 El Nacional 1.
Nov 9: Dep Quito 1 Barcelona 1; LDU 1 Dep Cuenca 2.
Nov 14: Dep Cuenca 0 LDU 2.
Nov 16: El Nacional 2 Macara 2; Barcelona 1 Dep Quito 1.
Nov 21: Macara 1 Dep Cuenca 2.
Nov 23: LDU 2 Barcelona 1; Dep Quito 1 El Nacional 0.
Nov 28: El Nacional 2 Dep Cuenca 0.
Nov 30: Dep Quito 2 LDU 0; Barcelona 2 Macara 2.
Dec 3: El Nacional 1 LDU 1; Dep Cuenca 2 Barcelona 0; Macara 1 Dep Quito 2.

ECUADOR – OVERALL CHAMP'SHIP PLAY-OFFS	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep Quito	9	6	2	1	12	4	23 [3]
LDU	9	4	1	4	11	11	15 [2]
El Nacional	9	3	4	2	9	8	13 [0]
Barcelona	9	2	5	2	9	10	12 [1]
Dep Cuenca	9	3	2	4	9	11	12 [1]
Macara	9	0	4	5	9	15	5 [1]

Bonus points from 1st and 2nd stages shown in brackets

PARAGUAY

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Nov 7: Sol de America 3 Pettirossi 1; 12 de Octubre 2 Libertad 2; Tacuary 0 Sportivo Luqueno 1.
Nov 8: 2 de Mayo 1 Guarani 1; Nacional 2 3 de Febrero 1.
Nov 9: Olimpia 1 Cerro Porteno 3.
Nov 11: Libertad 1 Tacuary 1.
Nov 12: Sportivo Luqueno 1 Olimpia 2; Pettirossi 1 12 de Octubre 1; Cerro Porteno 1 2 de Mayo 0; 3 de Febrero 2 Sol de America 0; Guarani 1 Nacional 0.
Nov 15: Olimpia 1 Libertad 2.
Nov 16: Pettirossi 0 3 de Febrero 0; Sol de America 1 Guarani 3; 12 de Octubre 0 Tacuary 1; Nacional 1 Cerro Porteno 0.
Nov 19: 2 de Mayo 2 Sportivo Luqueno 3.
Nov 22: Guarani 3 Pettirossi 1; Tacuary 1 Olimpia 1.
Nov 23: Sportivo Luqueno 4 Nacional 2; 3 de Febrero 2 12 de Octubre 1; Libertad 3 2 de Mayo 0; Cerro Porteno 2 Sol de America 0.
Nov 29: 2 de Mayo 0 Tacuary 1; 3 de Febrero 1 Guarani 4; Nacional 1 Libertad 1; 12 de Octubre 0 Olimpia 3.
Nov 30: Sol de America 2 Sportivo Luqueno 0; Pettirossi 0 Cerro Porteno 4.

PARAGUAY – CLOSING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Libertad	21	11	8	2	31	16	41
Guarani	21	11	7	3	34	17	40
Sol America	21	11	3	7	36	26	36
Cerro Porteno	21	9	7	5	30	24	34
Nacional	21	8	7	6	23	22	31
Tacuary	21	9	3	9	23	24	30
Olimpia	21	7	7	7	31	28	28
12 de Octubre	21	8	4	9	27	31	28
S Luqueno	21	6	6	9	27	35	24
3 de Febrero	21	6	5	10	25	29	23
2 de Mayo	21	3	10	8	23	31	19
Pettirossi	21	0	7	14	12	39	7

PERU

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Nov 8: Cesar Vallejo 2 Sport Ancash 1; Universitario 1 Coronel Bolognesi 2.
Nov 9: Juan Aurich 1 Atletico Minero 0; Melgar 3 Sport Boys 1; Jose Galvez 0 Alianza Atletico 0; Sporting Cristal 2 Cienciano 1; Universidad SMP 1 Alianza Lima 0.
Nov 15: Cienciano 3 Juan Aurich 1; Coronel Bolognesi 0 Universidad SMP 2.
Nov 16: Sport Ancash 0 Sporting Cristal 1; Atletico Minero 1 Universitario 1; Alianza Atletico 1 Melgar 1; Alianza Lima 2 Jose Galvez 1; Sport Boys 5 Cesar Vallejo 2.
Nov 19: Coronel Bolognesi 1 Melgar 1.
Nov 23: Cienciano 1 Atletico Minero 1; Juan Aurich 1 Alianza Lima 3; Jose Galvez 2 Cesar Vallejo 2; Melgar 2 Sport Ancash 1.
Nov 25: Universitario 0 Alianza Atletico 2.
Nov 26: Universidad SMP 0 Sport Boys 0; Sporting Cristal 1 Coronel Bolognesi 2.
Nov 29: Alianza Lima 1 Universitario 2; Cesar Vallejo 1 Melgar 1.
Nov 30: Alianza Atletico 1 Universidad SMP 2; Atletico Minero 0 Sporting Cristal 1; Coronel Bolognesi 1 Juan Aurich 2; Sport Ancash 1 Cienciano 0; Sport Boys 1 Jose Galvez 2.
Dec 3: Juan Aurich 2 Sport Boys 0; Cienciano 4 Alianza Lima 1; Coronel Bolognesi 3 Atletico Minero 2; Jose Galvez 1 Sport Ancash 1; Sporting Cristal 1 Alianza Atletico 1; Universitario 2 Cesar Vallejo 1.
Dec 4: Universidad SMP 0 Melgar 1.

PERU – CLOSING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Univ SMP	24	15	5	4	39	17	50
S Cristal	24	13	3	8	34	24	42
Sport Ancash	24	12	5	7	33	23	41
Cienciano	24	11	5	8	32	25	38
Jose Galvez	24	10	6	8	39	34	36
Melgar	24	10	6	8	31	31	36
Al Atletico	24	9	8	7	32	23	35
Cesar Vallejo	24	10	4	10	34	32	34
At Minero	24	8	9	7	29	24	33
Universitario	24	8	8	8	29	30	32
Al Lima	24	10	1	13	34	38	31
Juan Aurich	24	7	4	13	22	34	25
C Bolognesi	24	7	3	14	28	45	24
Sport Boys	24	1	7	16	17	53	10

URUGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Nov 8: Central Espanol 2 Tacuarembo 1; Nacional 2 Rampla Juniors 0.
Nov 9: Bella Vista 5 Cerro Largo 2; Cerro 0 Racing 0; Liverpool 2 Wanderers 1; River Plate 2 Juventud 1; Danubio 1 Defensor 0; Penarol 3 Villa Espanola 0.
Nov 15: Cerro Largo 2 Villa Espanola 0; Cerro 1 River Plate 0; Penarol 3 Liverpool 2; Wanderers 3 Juventud 0.
Nov 16: Racing 2 Defensor 0; Central Espanol 2 Bella Vista 0; Rampla Juniors 3 Tacuarembo 1; Danubio 1 Nacional 0.
Dec 3: Nacional 2 Villa Espanola 0.

URUGUAY – OPENING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	11	8	1	2	17	7	25
Danubio	11	8	0	3	19	10	24
Cerro	11	6	4	1	16	4	22
Penarol*	11	7	3	1	25	10	21
Racing	11	5	5	1	17	9	20
Liverpool	11	5	4	2	14	10	19
Defensor	11	5	3	3	16	9	18
C Espanol	11	4	4	3	11	15	16
Rampla Jrs	11	3	4	4	13	16	13
River Plate	11	3	4	4	10	13	13
Bella Vista	11	4	1	6	10	16	13
Tacuarembo	11	3	1	7	10	18	10
Wanderers	11	2	2	7	12	14	8
Cerro Largo	11	1	4	6	10	20	7
Villa Espanola	11	1	3	7	7	19	6
Juventud	11	1	1	9	5	22	4

**3pts deducted for incidents during game in previous opening championship*

VENEZUELA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Nov 9: Portuguesa 1 Carabobo 0; Caracas 0 Dep Italia 2; Estudiantes 2 El Vigia 1; Llaneros 0 Zamora 1; Guaros 3 Estrella Roja 3; Mineros 2 Minerven 1; Anzoategui 0 Monagas 0; Aragua 0 Dep Tachira 0.
Nov 12: Carabobo 2 Caracas 4.
Nov 15: Estrella Roja 1 Llaneros 2.
Nov 16: Carabobo 1 Guaros 0; El Vigia 1 Anzoategui 0; Zamora 2 Estudiantes 0; Dep Italia 2 Mineros 0; Monagas 2 Zulia 0; Minerven 2 Aragua 0; Dep Tachira 9 Portuguesa 2; UA Maracaibo 2 Caracas 1.
Nov 19: Carabobo 1 Aragua 3.
Nov 30: Guaros 2 Dep Tachira 2; Caracas 0 Monagas 2; Zulia 1 El Vigia 2; Estudiantes 1 Estrella Roja 0; Portuguesa 0 Minerven 2; Llaneros 1 Carabobo 1; Mineros 3 UA Maracaibo 1; Aragua 0 Dep Italia 2; Anzoategui 2 Zamora 1.

VENEZUELA – OPENING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep Italia	15	10	4	1	21	10	34
Caracas	15	8	2	5	25	18	26
Monagas	15	7	4	4	19	14	25
Dep Tachira	15	6	6	3	31	16	24
Zulia	14	7	3	4	24	18	24
Zamora	15	7	3	5	20	15	24
Anzoategui	14	6	4	4	20	14	22
El Vigia	15	5	6	4	19	18	21
Aragua	15	6	3	6	17	16	21
Llaneros	15	6	3	6	12	16	21
Minerven	15	6	2	7	21	22	20
UA Maracaibo	13	6	1	6	17	17	19
Estudiantes	15	6	1	8	20	22	19
Mineros	15	5	3	7	17	23	18
Carabobo	15	4	5	6	16	22	17
Estrella Roja	15	3	5	7	15	22	14
Portuguesa	15	3	1	11	13	34	10
Guaros	15	1	6	8	13	23	9

CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

GROUP A – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Marathon (Hnd)	6	4	1	1	12	5	13
Cruz Azul (Mex)	6	3	1	2	8	4	10
Saprissa (CR)	6	3	1	2	7	9	10
DC United (US)	6	0	1	5	4	13	1

Group B

Nov 26: Houston Dynamo (USA) 1 Luis Angel Firpo (ElS) 0.

GROUP B – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pumas (Mex)	6	3	3	0	18	7	12
Houston	6	2	3	1	9	9	9
Luis A Firpo	6	2	2	2	6	8	8
S F'cisco (Pan)	6	0	2	4	4	13	2

Group C

GROUP C – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atlante (Mex)	6	3	2	1	6	3	11
Montreal (Can)	6	3	2	1	10	5	11
Olimpia (Hnd)	6	2	2	2	10	6	8
J Public (T&T)	6	1	0	5	3	15	3

Group D

GROUP D – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santos (Mex)	6	3	1	2	14	11	10
Puerto Ri (PR)	6	2	2	2	9	10	8
Tauro (Pan)	6	2	2	2	9	10	8
Muni'pal (Gtm)	6	1	3	2	12	13	6

Top two in each group qualified for quarter-finals

MEXICO

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP
League stage

Nov 5: Jaguares 0 Pumas UNAM 3; Tecos UAG 2 Pachuca 2; Tigres 1 Cruz Azul 3.
Nov 8: San Luis 2 Santos 2; Jaguares 2 Pachuca 1; Tigres 0 Toluca 1; Indios 1 Cruz Azul 0; Atlas 2 Morelia 1; Atlante 0 Necaxa 1.
Nov 9: Puebla 2 Guadalajara 1; Pumas UNAM 3 Tecos UAG 0; America 1 Monterrey 0.
Nov 12: Atlante 3 Tecos UAG 1.
Nov 15: Tecos UAG 3 Puebla 0; Monterrey 1 Pumas UNAM 0; Cruz Azul 4 Jaguares 1; Guadalajara 2 Indios 0; Pachuca 1 Atlas 1.
Nov 16: Morelia 1 Tigres 2; Toluca 1 San Luis 0; Necaxa 2 America 0; Santos 0 Atlante 0.

MEXICO – OPENING – GROUP 1 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atlante	17	7	6	4	22	16	27
Santos	17	5	7	5	22	20	22
Pachuca	17	5	6	6	25	25	21
Indios	17	5	4	8	18	26	19
Monterrey	17	5	4	8	18	26	19
Puebla	17	2	9	6	12	21	15

GROUP 2 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pumas UNAM	17	7	5	5	22	13	26
Cruz Azul	17	7	5	5	29	23	26
Tecos UAG	17	7	4	6	30	28	25
Guadalajara	17	6	7	4	23	23	25
Morelia	17	6	6	5	27	20	24
America	17	5	6	6	22	23	21

GROUP 3 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Luis	17	8	5	4	24	20	29
Toluca	17	7	6	4	25	16	27
Tigres	17	7	5	5	22	16	26
Atlas	17	6	4	7	23	27	22
Jaguares	17	5	3	9	20	34	18
Necaxa	17	3	8	6	17	24	17

Top two in each group and the two other teams with the best league stage record qualified for quarter-finals

Quarter-finals

1st legs - Nov 22/23; 2nd legs - Nov 29/30
Cruz Azul v Pumas UNAM
0-0, 3-1 (agg 3-1)
Santos v San Luis
3-1, 2-1 (agg 5-2)
Tecos UAG v Toluca
0-0, 0-2 (agg 0-2)
Tigres v Atlante
1-1, 1-1 (agg 2-2; Atlante on better league record)

UNITED STATES

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS
Quarter-finals

1st legs - Oct 30/Nov 1; 2nd legs - Nov 6-9
Kansas City v Columbus
1-1, 0-2 (agg 1-3)
New England v Chicago
0-0, 0-3 (agg 0-3)
New York v Houston
1-1, 3-0 (agg 4-1)
Salt Lake v Chivas USA
1-0, 2-2 (agg 3-2)

Semi-finals*

Nov 13: Columbus 2 Chicago 1.
Nov 15: Salt Lake 0 New York 1.
**Single-leg ties*

Final (MLS Cup)

Nov 23 - Carson
New York 1 (Wolyniec 51)
Columbus 3 (Moreno 31, Marshall 53, Hejduk 82)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 27,000. **Ref:** Toledo

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Final, 2nd leg

Nov 16
Cotonsport (Cam) 2 (Lassina 45, Ousmaila 63)
Al Ahly (Egy) 2 (Hassan 38, Mohamed pen 89)
HT: 1-1
Al Ahly 4-2 on agg

CONFEDERATION CUP

Final, 1st leg

Nov 8
CS Sfaxien (Tun) 0
Etoile Sahel (Tun) 0

Final, 2nd leg

Nov 22
Etoile Sahel 2 (Opara 57, Abdennour 79)
CS Sfaxien 2 (Opoku 2, Nafti 74)
HT: 0-1
Agg 2-2. CS Sfaxien on away goals

ASIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Final, 2nd leg

Nov 12
Adelaide United (Aus) 0
Gamba Osaka (Jap) 2 (Lucas 4, 14)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 17,000. **Ref:** Mohd Salleh (Mly)
Gamba 5-0 on agg
Adelaide: Birighitti - Valkanis, Cassio, Jamieson, Cornthwaite, Ognenovski, Sarkies (Spagnuolo 59), Dodd, Diego (Younis 68), Reid, Cristiano (Pantelis 68).
Gamba: Fujigaya - Nakazawa, Yamaguchi, Akira, Endo, Futagawa, Yasuda (Shimohira 65), Sasaki (Yamazaki 58), Myojin (Bando 81), Hideo, Lucas.

AUSTRALIA

Nov 7: Sydney 1 Wellington 2.
Nov 8: Queensland 0 Melbourne 1.
Nov 9: Perth 2 Newcastle 2.
Nov 15: Central Coast 3 Adelaide 0.
Nov 21: Melbourne 2 Central Coast 1.
Nov 22: Adelaide 2 Sydney 0.
Nov 23: Queensland 4 Perth 1; Wellington 2 Newcastle 0.
Nov 28: Wellington 2 Melbourne 1; Sydney 1 Queensland 1.
Nov 29: Perth 2 Central Coast 2.
Nov 30: Newcastle 1 Adelaide 1.

AUSTRALIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Melbourne	13	7	2	4	23	14	23
Adelaide	13	6	3	4	18	16	21
Queensland	13	5	4	4	18	13	19
Central Coast	13	4	6	3	26	20	18
Wellington	13	5	3	5	14	17	18
Sydney	13	4	5	4	21	17	17
Newcastle	13	2	6	5	12	21	12
Perth	13	3	3	7	17	31	12

JAPAN

Nov 8: Yokohama F Marinos 1 Kyoto Sanga 3; Consadole Sapporo 1 Urawa Reds 2; Omiya Ardija 2 Kawasaki Frontale 1; Gamba Osaka 1 FC Tokyo 3; Kashiwa Reysol 2 Nagoya Grampus 1; Jubilo Iwata 1 Shimizu S-Pulse 0.
Nov 9: Oita Trinita 0 JEF United 0; Kashima Antlers 0 Albirex Niigata 0; Tokyo Verdy 0 Vissel Kobe 2.
Nov 23: Kawasaki Frontale 4 Gamba Osaka 0; Kyoto Sanga 2 Nagoya Grampus 3; Vissel Kobe 1 FC Tokyo 1; Urawa Reds 1 Shimizu S-Pulse 2; Oita Trinita 0 Kashima Antlers 1; Jubilo Iwata 3 Kashiwa Reysol 3; JEF United 0 Yokohama F Marinos 3; Albirex Niigata 2 Omiya Ardija 2; Tokyo Verdy 1 Consadole Sapporo 1.
Nov 29: Shimizu S-Pulse 3 JEF United 2; Kawasaki Frontale 4 Vissel Kobe 0; Yokohama F Marinos 2 Tokyo Verdy 0; Kashima Antlers 1 Jubilo Iwata 0; Gamba Osaka 1 Urawa Reds 0; Kashiwa Reysol 0 Oita Trinita 2.
Nov 30: Omiya Ardija 1 Kyoto Sanga 1; FC Tokyo 1 Albirex Niigata 0; Nagoya Grampus 3 Consadole Sapporo 1.

JAPAN	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kashima	33	17	9	7	55	30	60
Nagoya	33	17	7	9	48	35	58
Kawasaki	33	17	6	10	63	42	57
Oita	33	16	7	10	33	24	55
FC Tokyo	33	16	7	10	48	42	55
Urawa	33	15	8	10	49	36	53
Shimizu	33	15	7	11	47	41	52
Gamba	33	14	8	11	44	46	50
Vissel	33	12	11	10	39	36	47
Yokohama	33	12	9	12	37	31	45
Kashiwa	33	12	7	14	46	45	43
Kyoto	33	11	8	14	36	43	41
Omiya	33	11	7	15	35	45	40
Albirex	33	10	9	14	29	44	39
Jubilo	33	10	7	16	40	47	37
Tokyo Verdy	33	10	7	16	38	48	37
JEF	33	9	8	16	32	51	35
Consadole	33	4	6	23	36	69	18

SOUTH KOREA

League stage

Nov 9: Ulsan 1 Busan 0; Daejeon 0 Gwangju 0; Chunnam 0 Jeju 0; Chonbuk 3 Gyeongnam 1; Pohang 1 Seoul 2; Incheon 1 Suwon 3; Daegu 0 Songnam 1.

SOUTH KOREA – LEAGUE STAGE – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Suwon	26	17	3	6	46	24	54
Seoul	26	15	9	2	44	25	54
Songnam	26	15	6	5	45	21	51
Ulsan	26	14	7	5	39	26	49
Pohang	26	13	5	8	43	34	44
Chonbuk	26	11	4	11	39	37	37
Incheon	26	9	9	8	29	30	36
Gyeongnam	26	10	5	11	35	39	35
Chunnam	26	8	5	13	26	40	29
Jeju	26	7	7	12	23	31	28
Daegu	26	8	2	16	46	58	26
Busan	26	5	7	14	30	39	22
Daejeon	26	3	12	11	18	35	21
Gwangju	26	3	7	16	22	46	16

As league stage winners, Suwon progressed to Final directly; as league stage runners-up, Seoul progressed to semi-final directly. The teams placed third to sixth entered round 1 of the play-offs

Play-offs, round 1

Nov 22: Ulsan 0 Pohang 0 (aet; Ulsan 4-2 on pens)
Nov 23: Songnam 1 Chonbuk 2 (aet).

Play-offs, round 2

Nov 26: Ulsan 1 Chonbuk 0.

Semi-final

Nov 30: Seoul 3 Ulsan 2 (aet).

Final, 1st leg

Dec 3
Seoul 1 (Adilson 21)
Suwon 1 (Kwak Hee-ju 80)
HT: 1-0

OCEANIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

Nov 22: Waitakere United (NZ) 3 Port Vila Sharks (Van) 0.

GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Waitakere	2	1	1	0	5	2	4
Auckland (NZ)	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Port Vila	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Group B

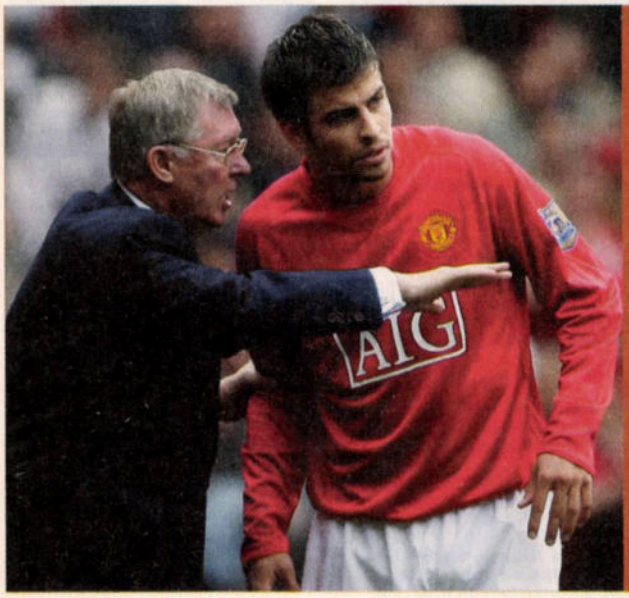
Nov 22: Koloale (Sol) 3 Hekari Souths (PNG) 1.

GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Koloale	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Ba (Fij)	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Hekari Souths	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

Remaining matchdays: Dec 13, Feb 14, Mar 7, Mar 28

Famous Last Words

Who said what and why



"I thought I spoke English but Sir Alex sounded like he was from China."

Barcelona defender Gerard Pique recalls the linguistic problems he experienced during a spell at Manchester United.

"You don't need a shotgun to win a match. Sometimes a water pistol is enough if you can aim at the eyes of your opponents."

Does Sinisa Mihajlovic plan a hit or a prank in his new role as Bologna coach?

"Nazis out."

Werder Bremen supporters react to skinheads infiltrating their ranks on their visit to Bochum.

"If the club wants to be big, we have to sign more players. But at this moment the team needs to improve the defence. When you build a house you have to start from the floor."

Are you listening in Abu Dhabi? Brazilian star Robinho has some advice for Man City's owners ahead of the January transfer window.

"Peace and order."

When asked what he most misses about Germany since leaving the Bundesliga for Rio side Flamengo, flamboyant Brazilian playmaker Marcelinho makes a surprising admission.

"Up to now we've received precious little attention. This team deserves a lot more."

Jose Mota, the coach of shock Portuguese league high-flyers Leixoes bemoans the lack of recognition of his side's efforts.

"Where's the risk ? If it doesn't work, I'll quit the stage like I arrived and people will say: 'You see, he just wasn't good enough.' "

Talkative Caen striker Steve Savidan on the eve of making his debut for France at the age of 30.

"At times you think you are in South America."

Veteran Brazilian midfielder Savio is amazed by the fervour of fans at his latest club, Cypriot Champions League overachievers Anorthosis.

Playing the blame game...Mourinho

"After 15 years playing at the highest level, seeing me on the bench is going to be more and more usual."

Real Madrid legend Raul sees himself as a bit-part player these days.

"You journalists say we've let in five goals in our last two games because of my tactics. It's not the case. They were down to individual errors."

Jose Mourinho, coach of Internazionale, continues his war of words with the enemy – Italian sportswriters.

"If you carry on making bad decisions, one of these bullets is for you."

Spanish referee Choucino Landeira describes how an enraged fan threatened to shoot him during a Galician league game.

"Investors and players' agents should be banned from the game. Otherwise they will take over football."

Argentinian FA president Julio Grondona warns about the future.

No substitute for class...Raul

NEXT MONTH FEBRUARY ISSUE ON SALE JANUARY 16

CLASSIC FOOTBALL SHIRTS.CO.UK

BE A FRACTION FASTER
Studies prove that during a match Lucozade Sport helps you maintain speed for longer
Lucozade SPORT
PROVEN TO GIVE YOU AN EDGE